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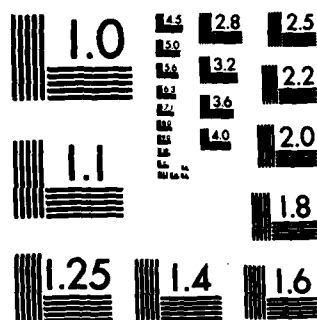
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FROM THE COMMANDANT

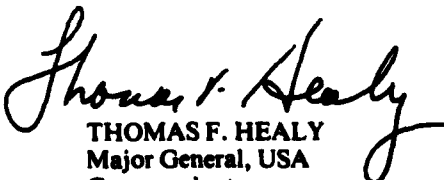
The USAWC is emphasizing improved communications skills and encouraging the publication of articles by students and faculty. To this end, and through the generosity of the US Army War College Foundation, cash prizes are presented annually for the best student papers and for the best staff and faculty articles published. For the Class of 1984, including resident and corresponding students, and its faculty, 16 awards totaling \$6500 were made for student studies and published articles. For the resident Class of 1985, five options are being offered for written research projects. First, students volunteer or are selected to address topics that require priority resolution. These are designated Commandant's Studies. I have chosen nine for this year, including the Employment of the Light Infantry Division; Special Operations Forces; and The Division Air Cavalry Brigade. The second option is to choose USAWC faculty topics. This year, some are: Planning for Coalition Warfare; Central America: The New Revolutionary Warfare and the Counterinsurgency Response; New Weaponry and Strategy; A Logistical Campaign; The 1985 Army Professionalism Study; Soviet Tactical Air and Helicopter Support; Deep Battle Sustainment; C' in AirLand Battle; A Concept for CEWI for EAC; Future of ROK-GOJ Cooperation; and Soviet Views Concerning Correlation of Forces. As a third option, students may, with faculty approval, research their own individual topics. The student's fourth option is to conduct an oral history project. For this, the researcher gathers valuable information about notable military leaders, DOD or service civilian officials, or other defense related groups. The 1985 Oral History Program will include a Division Command Lessons Learned study, which was approved by Army Chief of Staff, General John A. Wickham, Jr. Another study will center on lessons learned from company commanders in Vietnam. The fifth option is student research on computer-assisted operational studies. An example is a Comparison of US Combat Brigades. This study uses an advanced simulation model (JANUS) to compare capabilities of different US Army brigades against a variety of threat arrays. Other examples involve four different simulation models currently in use or being tested in our Center for Land Warfare. In 1985, USAWC resident students have an outstanding opportunity to explore in depth topics of interest to them and of value to the Army.

In Academic Year 1985 some conferences and short courses supplement the US Army War College's resident and corresponding studies curricula. During the period 20-22 September, the USAWC hosted a conference on "Lessons from Recent Wars." Sponsored by the Strategic Studies Institute, the conference was organized by Professors Robert Harkavy and Stephanie Neuman, and featured noted participants from the United States and Great Britain.

The Chief of Staff selected 12 general officers for the second General Officer Professional Development Conference held at Carlisle Barracks 28 October-2 November. It emphasized theater campaign planning as the central theme.

We are conducting the second Reserve Component National Security Issues Seminar in Washington on 26 November. The Secretary of the Army, John O. Marsh, Jr., has a personal interest in this series and will be the keynote speaker. Mr. Frank Barnett, president of the National Strategy Information Center; The Honorable Edward J. Derwinski, counsellor of the Department of State; and Mr. John Collins, senior specialist at the Library of Congress, are scheduled to address the 45 reserve component officers invited to the seminar.

The Department of Corresponding Studies has initiated a new Defense Strategy Course for 1985. A six month course, it is designed to provide selected reserve and active component officers a basic overview of geopolitics, economics, technology, and social issues in the formulation of national security policy. There are 63 active, USAR, and National Guard officers enrolled in this first Defense Strategy Course. At the same time, of course, the Department of Corresponding Studies continues to evaluate requirements submitted by 197 students of the DCS Class of 1985 and 309 students of the DCS Class of 1986 who are stationed around the world.


THOMAS F. HEALY
Major General, USA
Commandant

COMMUNIST OFFENSIVE STRATEGY AND THE DEFENSE OF SOUTH VIETNAM

by

HUNG P. NGUYEN

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Throughout the Vietnam War, the most mysterious figure among the communist military high command was a man known by his *nom de guerre*, Tran Van Tra. Rarely appearing in public, although known to American intelligence services, General Tra was believed to be responsible for the planning of both the 1968 Tet Offensive and the 1972 drive toward Saigon that was contained at An Loc.¹ Beyond that, not much was known with certainty about Tra's role and responsibility in the communist southern command.

The mysteries surrounding Tra's war career were lifted, however, with the publication of his memoirs, *Ending the Thirty Years' War*, in 1982.² During the First Indochina War, General Tra began his long and extraordinary career in guerrilla and mobile warfare as commander of Vietminh forces in French Cochinchina (basically the Mekong Delta). After the Geneva agreement in 1954, he was regrouped to the north, like many of his comrades in the southern command, leaving behind the political and military infrastructure of the Vietminh. In 1963, with the insurgency movement in the south on the rise, Tra was sent back to the south by Ho Chi Minh to command all Viet Cong forces in South Vietnam. He was responsible for organizing the Viet Cong into main force units and securing their bases.

During the next two years, Tra conducted a mobile war against the South Vietnamese army which threatened to bring down the Saigon regime until American ground troops were introduced in 1965. With the much heavier involvement of large North Vietnamese units in the war, Hanoi reorganized communist forces into four different commands: the Tri-Thien region (the two provinces south of the DMZ, including Hue); the Central Highlands; the coastal lowlands from Da Nang to Cam Ranh Bay; and COSVN (the Central Office for South Vietnam), comprising the southern half of South Vietnam (see Map 1). While the other three regions were placed under the direct control of Hanoi, COSVN retained substantial independence in planning and operations. COSVN was placed under the command of General Nguyen Chi Thanh, a rising star in the Politburo and chairman of the Central Military-Party Committee until he died in 1967, reportedly in a bombing raid. From then until 1975, General Tra commanded COSVN forces and became the guiding hand behind the communist offensives of 1968, 1972, and 1975.³

The point of examining Tra's career is to appreciate his unique perspective on the war. Here is a man truly experienced in both guerrilla and conventional warfare, one who spent 12 years at COSVN—the mobile and

elusive southern command that allied troops never managed to track down, even during Operation Junction City in 1967 and the Cambodian incursion in 1970. As the military commander at COSVN, Tra was responsible for the conduct of the big-unit war in the jungles and mountains as well as the guerrilla war in the Mekong Delta, an experience quite unlike his colleagues in the other commands. Tra was thus in a unique position to enunciate and execute a form of warfare in Vietnam whose character and underlying principles have baffled strategists.

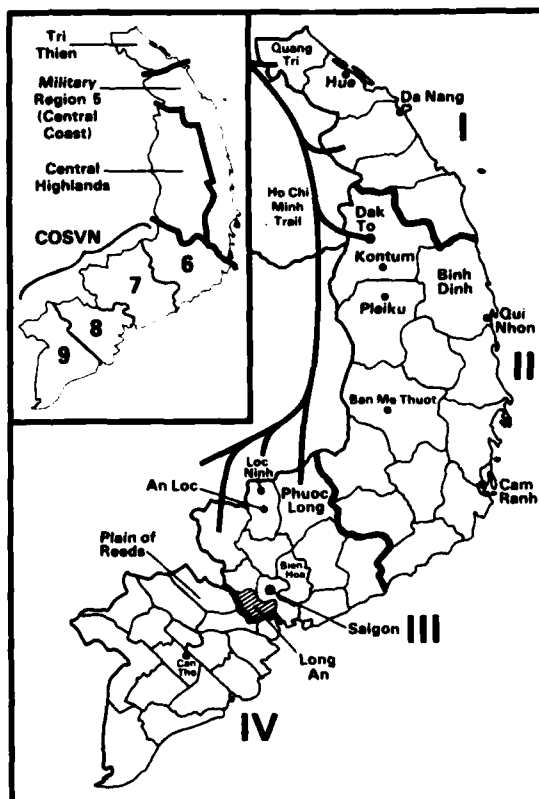
Unlike Giap's turgid tracts on revolutionary war, Tra's memoirs were written in a vibrant literary style, replete with accounts of the planning and conduct of the war in his theater of operations. Tra also presented in his book the clearest statement yet by the communists of the basic principles underlying their strategy and operational art during the war. Most importantly, Tra's special relationship with the southern cadres, as well as his intimate knowledge of the thinking of the central command in Hanoi, gives one a rare look at the viewpoints of the different participants on strategies for the war. Here one can find a spectrum of opinions that correspond remarkably to the debates among American strategists about the character of the war. Some communist officials in the south advocated a protracted guerrilla war against the Americans and South Vietnamese and saw the gaining of control of the rural areas as the vital step before victory, and the populated lowlands and river deltas as the main battlefields. Others, especially members of the North Vietnamese General Staff and some field commanders in the other regions, viewed the war in an essentially conventional light, i.e. as an attrition struggle between two armies. Tra makes clear in his book that he, together with some leading figures in the Politburo, held a third, quite different, position. Tra presents his views in the form of a series of debates at crucial points of the war and on the strategic rationales for the planning of each campaign. Although the focus of the book is on the 1973-75 period, Tra constantly harks back to the lessons that

he learned in earlier campaigns in trying to come up with an offensive plan in 1974-75.

This article examines the basic principles of communist strategy and operational art as enunciated by Tra and others in the communist high command.⁴ Their statements on this subject will be compared and contrasted with the perceptions and analyses of American and South Vietnamese participants in the war. Tra's own assessment of American and South Vietnamese strategy and its effectiveness will also be analyzed and compared to alternative strategies suggested but not implemented during the war.

PRINCIPLES OF COMMUNIST STRATEGY

Long after it ended, the Vietnam War still eludes neat categorization. A common



Map 1. Communist and South Vietnamese Military Regions.

view is that the war is a variant, albeit unique, of Mao's concept of revolutionary war. In this view, revolutionary war can be conceived as a military crescendo consisting of three phases: organization and political mobilization, guerrilla warfare, and the final climactic confrontation, where guerrilla units are converted into big units to defeat the enemy's conventional forces. The first phase, in which the primary objective is to build up an underground organization and infrastructure in the outlying areas, is essentially defensive in character. The second phase sees a rising tempo of guerrilla warfare to push for more control of the countryside up to a point of equilibrium, where the insurgents gain enough control of the surrounding countryside to threaten the cities and the connecting lines of communication. The last phase is entirely offensive and the most decisive, when the insurgents concentrate their forces for a military or political decision.³

This model contains a fair resemblance to what happened in South Vietnam during 1959-64, before the massive introduction of US combat troops into the war. In fact, it was the realization that the communists were about to move into this final phase (with the help of the political turmoil in 1963 and North Vietnamese regular regiments) that prompted the American action. What happened afterward, however, represents a substantial and qualitative departure from Mao's model of a conflict rising in intensity and stakes. Throughout 1965-75, large-scale battles occurred simultaneously with small-scale guerrilla attacks, at times with equal intensity. In fact, there is a consensus among American analysts that the Vietnam War was a "double war" of two components: the big-unit war and the "other war"—the war for population control—with the corresponding strategies of attrition and pacification. The disagreement among these analysts is on the timing and emphasis of these two strategies, not on the characterization of the war as such.⁴

This compartmentalization of the war clearly is not shared by Tra, or for that

matter, by the leadership in Hanoi. They look at the Vietnam War as a war of syntheses (*chien tranh tong hop*).⁵ Of these syntheses, the most crucial, in military terms, were:

- The synthesis of the three types of forces, deployed both in the front and the rear of the enemy.
- The synthesis of operations in the three strategic areas: the jungles and mountains, the lowlands and river deltas, and the cities.
- A unique version of the blitzkrieg, which stressed the *synchronization* of an offensive on the basis of the two spatial syntheses to create the conditions for a total collapse of the enemy.

The Synthesis of the Three Types of Forces

The first synthesis involved main, local, and guerrilla forces. Main forces were regular troops organized in regiments and divisions, which could break up and disperse or regroup depending on the circumstances. Sometimes they could even fight in small units as guerrillas. As a rule, these troops were under the control of COSVN or a military sub-regional command.⁶ Local forces were usually organized in companies and battalions, under the direct control of provincial committees, and were similarly deployed flexibly in combat. These forces could be employed to support guerrillas in their usual missions or main force units in their operations. They could thus be used to counter pacification or for conventional battles. Guerrillas, besides performing their classic missions, constituted a source of manpower for local and main forces.⁷

The strategic disposition (*chien luoc*) that allowed this synthesis to develop its effects fully is called the *cai rang luoc*. This untranslatable term evokes the image of a comb with its teeth sinking deep into a lock of hair. At the forefront of this deployment are the guerrilla units and the party cells, usually interspersed with the enemy in an intricate pattern. The smallest unit at each locality forms a link with—and can rely on the

support of—a chain of larger units, all the way up to battalions or even larger formations. These mutually supporting links in the chain extend all the way from the “liberated” to the contested and the “enemy-controlled” areas. These units, according to Tra, form

a system which cannot afford to lose a single link in the chain. This is the magical formation of our people's revolutionary war, causing the enemy to suffocate, creating tension and fear in him night and day, so that he sees a need to create a defense and a strong military force everywhere before he can become confident.¹⁰

Once established, this system would allow the main, local, and guerrilla forces to function in a mutually supporting manner. Lacking motorized and air transport and the control of the main lines of communication, especially in the populated lowlands, for example, the main force units could not move around en masse at will and thus would have to rely on a chain of supply put in place by the supporting political and military infrastructure.¹¹ Besides fulfilling this supporting function, local and guerrilla forces could also play a crucial role in offensive operations and participate directly in attacks on critical targets behind the front line of the battle, in coordination with a frontal assault by main forces. On the other hand, local guerrilla units, benefiting from the continuous support of local (and sometimes main force) units familiar with the local terrain and the appropriate tactics, could provide a counterforce to the pacification strategy. It was this coordination between main, local, and guerrilla forces that would prove so intractable to the pacification strategy. An area could be secure one day and become insecure, practically on the next day, because of the mobility of the local and main force units operating in support of the guerrillas. This successful infiltration of main force units would reduce the effectiveness of government territorial units and tie down ARVN divisions in territorial security

missions. As South Vietnamese General Ngo Quang Truong pointed out, the reverse was also true, because “when the shield or screen provided by ARVN and US units on the outside was solid and reliable, allowing no chance for enemy main force units to penetrate, then the Regional and Popular forces were most effective.”¹²

This system led ARVN to station forces everywhere to maintain security, tying down large numbers of troops in contested and even Saigon-controlled areas, neutralizing the South Vietnamese advantage in number. Moreover, guerrilla operations, always with the suspected support of larger units behind them, could ring up “false alarms,” forcing large sweep operations that turned up with nothing, compounding the frustration and exhaustion of ARVN units responsible for confronting the VC or NVA main forces.¹³ All in all, this strategic disposition and system of coordination was intended to create maximum uncertainty and insecurity and to tie down the bulk of government forces in territorial security missions, thus inducing all the elements of friction that eventually wear down a much larger military machine.

How was this basic synthesis and strategic disposition put into practice by Tra and other communist commanders? Their different reactions to the new situation in South Vietnam after the Paris peace agreement in 1973 illuminate the difficulty of maintaining it without strong and viable local and guerrilla forces. For example, General Tra attributed the stalemate in the Quang Tri and Hue area south of the DMZ after 1973 to the failure to adhere to this basic strategy.¹⁴

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Instead of maintaining the usual three zones ("liberated," contested, and "enemy controlled"), the regional commander willingly pulled back his force to the agreed line to consolidate his rear and thus unwittingly created a war with fronts. In the process, he risked being pushed back when the balance of conventional forces swung to ARVN's favor. What Tra neglected to mention was the fact that the Viet Cong guerrillas and infrastructure, together with their mini-bases (*lom*) in the region, were effectively rooted out by the successful pacification campaigns from 1969 to 1972. During that period, communist main forces were put at bay far beyond the populated areas by the solid shield of US and ARVN forces, thus cutting the connections between these three types of forces and disrupting their coordination.¹⁵ On Tra's part, he favored this forward deployment so much that he allowed local commanders in the Mekong Delta to continue pushing back government forces in the contested areas and insisted that the system of 60 or so guerrilla bases around Saigon be preserved at all costs. Without the maintenance of this system, Tra thought, the repenetration of the NVA and VC into the Delta in 1974 would not have been possible and Thieu would have consolidated his strategic defense in the Mekong and Saigon areas.¹⁶ On this point, General Cao Van Vien, the South Vietnamese chairman of the Joint General Staff, lamented, "The standstill ceasefire thus gave the Communists a chance to stay mixed with the South Vietnamese positions in an intricate pattern which had always been the enemy scheme."¹⁷ Moreover, "the Communists would certainly try, as soon as the ceasefire was announced, to break down into small units and penetrate our villages and hamlets."¹⁸

Likewise, after the decimation of the VC ranks during Tet in 1968, Tra was willing to disperse main force units into the Mekong Delta to preserve the VC infrastructure. Tra cited the example of Long An province, the focal point of pacification in 1968-69, and a strategic area linking Saigon with the Mekong Delta (see Map 1). To preserve the VC infrastructure and guerrilla movement in the

province, Tra sent in a main force regiment (with continuous reinforcements for losses) to fight as guerrillas to protect the infrastructure and as regrouped units to counter the US and South Vietnamese campaign of pacification. Despite the heavy losses, Tra felt that the survival of the infrastructure in a strategically important area was worth the price. As a result, although the VC overtly controlled only four percent of the population in Long An, the VC infrastructure there was still intact.¹⁹ This nucleus of organization would become the seed of a new guerrilla movement after 1972. In 1975, the three to four local force regiments there formed a surprise prong of attack against the southern defense line of Saigon during the final offensive.²⁰

Heavy as the cost of preserving the infrastructure may have been, it was even more costly and difficult, Tra pointed out, to reenter an area once the infrastructure was lost.²¹ Whenever communist forces were withdrawn from a contested area, together with the VC infrastructure, whether it was on their own initiative or not, recreating their bases and infrastructure was "much more difficult than to do so in areas where the infrastructure was previously nonexistent."²² This surprising assessment implies that if pacification was to be successful, priority should have been given to permanently rooting out the VC infrastructure in an area (even if defended by main force units). This task, once accomplished, would have yielded far more results than a large sweep operation lasting a few days, leaving local defense to territorial units after government big units had left.²³ Simply put, the destruction of the VC infrastructure and the associated mini-bases was a much greater loss to the Viet Cong in terms of their future effectiveness than the casualties suffered by the local combat troops, which could be offset by the influx of main force units.

We have seen how the three types of communist forces were used together to counter the pacification strategy and tie down the bulk of government forces in territorial security missions. On the other hand, this synthesis of forces also helped communist main forces in their big-unit war by

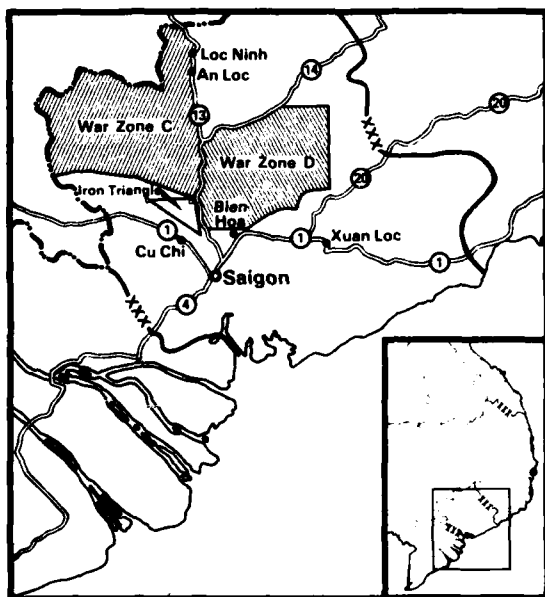
preventing South Vietnamese infantry divisions from massing in one place for a prolonged operation without endangering the security of their usual area of responsibility. Since territorial security was not their primary mission, communist main forces could mass in their predetermined zone of operation and strike at the South Vietnamese weak points.²⁴

To appreciate the dilemma posed to military planners in Saigon by this strategy, one can look at the example of the ARVN 22nd Division in the populated, coastal Binh Dinh province adjoining the strategic Central Highlands (see Map 1). In 1964, the division was deployed as a counter-guerrilla force and concentrated on small-unit operations for pacification. As General Westmoreland pointed out, as "progress began to become evident, two main-force enemy regiments debouched from the hills and virtually destroyed the spread-out South Vietnamese units in detail, making a shambles of the pacification program. It took well over a year to recover what was lost."²⁵ He used this case to argue against the Marines' emphasis on pacification and the view that "the real war is among the people and not among these

mountains."²⁶ On the other hand, in 1972 the 22nd Division was redeployed to help stem the communist Easter offensive in the Central Highlands, and thus left behind a large gap for the local Viet Cong and NVA main force units to exploit. A large part of Binh Dinh province was occupied by communist forces for more than two months before government units, released from the Central Highlands front, could drive the communists from the area. In general, ARVN infantry divisions could not be extricated from their territorial missions to serve as a mobile reserve because they acted as the "primary forces that kept territorial security from deteriorating."²⁷ In 1975, the 22nd Division was again pinned down in an indecisive struggle for control of Binh Dinh province and thus was unable to reinforce government troops in the Central Highlands.

The Synthesis of Operations in the Three Strategic Areas

The above argument about where the "real war" was brings one naturally to an extremely important principle underlying communist strategy: the synthesis of operations in the three strategic areas—the jungles and mountains, the lowlands and river deltas, and the cities.²⁸ In the communists' view, their strategy had always been offensive in character, and a strategic offensive posture was assumed in all three strategic areas. In this offensive strategy, the main forces decided the war. Since the jungles and mountains formed a natural terrain for the massing of troops and the establishment of their bases and sanctuaries, it was there that the war would be decided. Tra rejected the view that the war could only be decided once the populous plains and river deltas had been "liberated." In his view, this strategy of "using the countryside to surround the towns" would put the communist main forces, the decisive forces, at a disadvantage.²⁹ From "plenty of experiences," he knew that the increasingly mechanized communist main forces could not mass effectively for large-scale battles in the river deltas because of the muddy terrain and the



Map 2. COSVN Strongholds
North of Saigon in 1967.

lack of control by communist forces of the main lines of communication. It was difficult for infantry units to advance without using the roads, let alone tanks. For that reason, the best way to deploy main forces in the deltas was to form them into light infantry regiments without heavy artillery.³⁰ The jungles and mountains, therefore, became the decisive strategic area, because that was where the mechanized main forces could mass into divisions and maximize their effectiveness. Only twice during the war, in 1962 and in 1974, did the river deltas become the primary strategic objectives in the communist offensive plans.³¹ These two periods, one notices, immediately preceded the years Hanoi was planning the final offensives to decide the war. The purpose of designating the populous river deltas and lowlands as the primary strategic objective was to disperse and tie down ARVN forces in counter-guerrilla efforts, thus preventing them from massing effectively against communist main force units during the final offensive.

The way Tra targeted the river deltas as the primary strategic objective during the 1973-74 dry season also illuminated the principle of the second "synthesis." Targeting the deltas here, Tra explained, did not mean that COSVN main forces should be committed to the Mekong Delta on a large scale, because of the reasons discussed above.³² Rather, Tra would order the divisional commanders to quickly organize and train a number of companies and battalions to reinforce the military sub-regional commands. In the region west of the Mekong River, because of heavy government pressures there, he would detach one whole regiment from a main force division to be sent there. The timing and intensity of the COSVN forces' offensive were to be closely coordinated with other forces in the river deltas to prevent the concentration of ARVN forces and the mobile reserve units in operations in the Mekong Delta.³³ Two COSVN divisions, therefore, would come out from their bases in War Zone C and War Zone D for a probing attack against the Iron Triangle and an area northeast of Saigon (see

Map 2). Thus the offensive would both tie down the III Corps forces, preventing them from reinforcing those in the plains and river deltas, and punch holes in the middle defense line of Saigon.³⁴ In the IV Corps area, Tra would deploy one understrength NVA division and sapper units to the Plain of Reeds to tie down the efficient ARVN 9th Division. This would leave only the weakened ARVN 21st Division in the area west of the Mekong, together with its territorial units, to combat the combined main and local forces there.

The success of the anti-pacification campaign during the dry season of 1973-74 (from December to May) caused the Central Military-Party Committee in Hanoi (headed by Giap) to issue a resolution in April 1974 calling for a step-up of this campaign to push for more control of the plains and river deltas.³⁵ Specifically the command of the Tri-Thien region south of the DMZ was asked to recreate the "three zones formation," disrupting "the enemy's front-line formation," while tying down the two marine and airborne divisions there to prevent them from being redeployed elsewhere.³⁶ In the IV Corps area, the remaining ARVN division in the Mekong Delta had to break up into battalion-sized units to help defend the outposts, many of which were overextended in VC-controlled areas. At the end of 1974, government forces had to abandon many of these overextended outposts and tried to defend only company-sized ones.³⁷ This had a tremendous psychological effect on the population of the area, because to them "the outpost was the symbol of governmental authority, an indication of the government's determination to stay with them and provide protection."³⁸ The result of this offensive, Tra claimed, was to push communist control of the population in the COSVN area nearly back to the level achieved before Tet in 1968.³⁹

The key to understanding Tra's dry-season plan in 1973-74 lies in Sun Tzu's discussion of the actions of two instruments of force at the disposal of the generals: the normal, direct, or *cheng*, force and the

extraordinary, indirect, or *ch'i*, force.⁴⁰ The normal force fixes or distracts the enemy, and the extraordinary force strikes when and where it is not expected. Thus,

the force which confronts the enemy is the normal; that which goes to his flanks the extraordinary *I make the enemy conceive my normal force to be the extraordinary and my extraordinary to be the normal.* Moreover, the normal may become extraordinary and vice versa Generally, in battle, use the normal force to engage; use the extraordinary to win.⁴¹

Tra used the main force divisions in War Zone C and War Zone D as normal forces to fix and distract Saigon forces and to engage ARVN's strongest divisions, whereas the local and guerrilla forces (reinforced by some main forces) acted as the extraordinary forces to gain their strategic objective in the Mekong Delta. Judging by the deployment of ARVN units, it seems that Saigon thought the reverse was true. In 1975, the main force divisions did reverse their role and became the extraordinary forces, the forces of "decision," and the guerrillas the normal, the forces of "distraction." Boggled down in their territorial security missions in the Mekong Delta, the ARVN divisions there were unable to redeploy to defend Saigon.⁴²

The Tet Offensive serves as another example of the working of this synthesis. Throughout 1967, most American forces were drawn into fighting in the jungled mountains of South Vietnam, from Khe Sanh and the DMZ to Dak To in the Central Highlands and the Iron Triangle and War Zone C in the III Corps area.⁴³ Thus, the North Vietnamese and Viet Cong divisions in this strategic area acted as normal forces fixing the bulk of allied combat troops to allow the Viet Cong guerrillas and local forces (or main forces in regiment-sized or smaller units) to strike at the cities for a decision.⁴⁴ The towns and cities of South Vietnam were certainly the weakest links in the defense. Only 10 to 20 percent of ARVN forces were estimated to be present in their

garrisons when the attacks began, almost simultaneously, throughout South Vietnam.⁴⁵

Hanoi's Blitzkrieg Theory

Hanoi's war strategy had a temporal aspect as well. In this theory, an offensive should be synchronized to maximize its effects, to prevent the concentration of allied defense forces in any one place or in any enclave and thus spread them as thin as possible throughout the country. Throughout the war, the communists carried out their general offensives simultaneously over the length of South Vietnam in order to defeat the allied forces in detail by not allowing units from one region to reinforce another or mass for a concentrated defense. Moreover, this principle of synchronization was dictated because, although communist main forces were engaged in "an entirely mobile mode of combat, they were only mobile within a specific region and coordinated closely with the localities," and thus they were "never mobile throughout the theater of operations or detached from the localities."⁴⁶ Therein lay the communist advantage, because "all localities were guided and coordinated closely from the center in a united fashion." Therefore, the success of an offensive depended critically on whether the planned disposition of communist forces allowed them to achieve an overwhelming superiority over the enemy in the objective area while at the same time preventing enemy reinforcements from the other regions from reversing this situation. In this scheme, forces-in-place, striking simultaneously at their predetermined targets, could win a rapid victory entirely by themselves if some strategic objectives had been achieved that created the conditions for the total collapse of the enemy. Here Tra distinguished between an offensive for "total annihilation" and one for "total collapse." To strike for "total collapse" meant:

There will still be a *coup de main* to rapidly undermine the enemy so that he no longer possesses the will and capability to resist or

counter-attack, thus leading him to total collapse, total defeat—despite the fact that his troops are still numerous and well-equipped. This *coup de main* does not necessarily mean the destruction of the bulk of enemy vital forces but only certain parts of them. It also means the occupation of certain localities with strategic significance. This *coup de main* thus creates a decisive situation causing the enemy to lose his morale and will to fight, to become chaotic, and when he faces a relentless offensive and uprising will collapse in parts and then in totality.⁴⁷

This strike for total collapse lay behind the Tet Offensive in 1968, but the communists could not achieve that goal because, Tra thought, the strategic objectives established by Hanoi were far beyond the capabilities of his available forces, despite “marvelous planning and execution.” The objectives, Tra pointed out, were due mainly to “illusions based on subjective wishes.” However, Tet was a “realistic and large-scale exercise” to enable the communists to refine their offensive principle and understand “the enemy’s laws of action.”

Tet was thus the first manifestation of Hanoi’s version of the blitzkrieg (*than toc*, or “lightning speed”), which stressed the synchronization of an offensive undertaken by forces-in-place to achieve rapid victory through the total collapse of the enemy. The emphasis was on the *disruption* of the enemy’s defensive plans rather than the *destruction* of enemy forces. The speed of an offensive was attained by the operational successes of forces-in-place, over a large span of territory. On this point, Tra states that *than toc* meant:

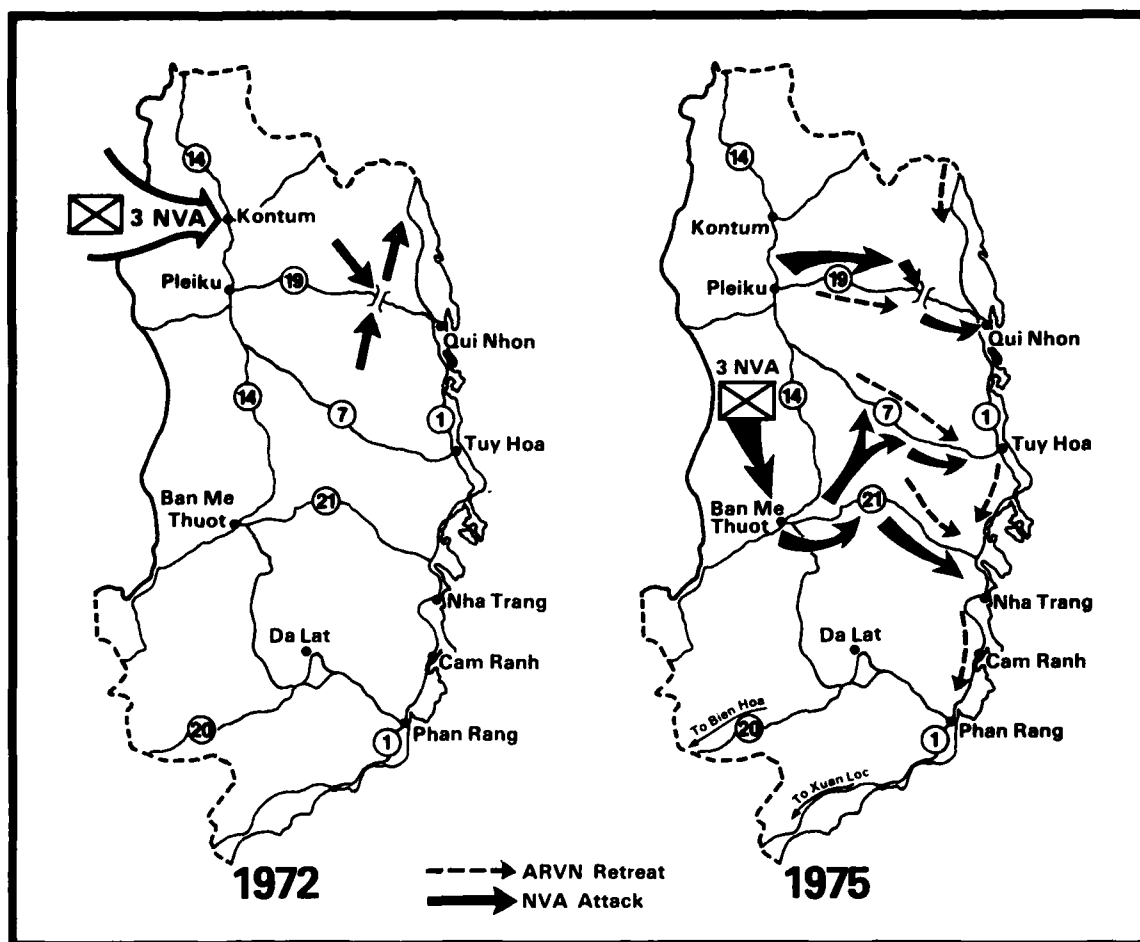
covering a wide space in a short time, lightning actions in combat, in operations and, more importantly, in a strategic period, in the way of ending a war. Don’t think of it as a lightning offensive from afar with the use of mobile main forces because, then, one would never comprehend its working.⁴⁸

Even the 1975 offensive fell into this pattern because the attacks on the Central Highlands occurred at the same time as other communist actions in the northern quarters, the central coastal lowlands, and COSVN. In fact, the offensive on Saigon started on 10 March, roughly the same time as the attack on Ban Me Thuot, with COSVN forces making probing attacks around the northern and western defense lines. After the fall of Da Nang at the end of March, Hanoi allowed Tra to use the NVA division held in reserve and two other divisions to attack Xuan Loc, a strategic town guarding the approaches to Bien Hoa and Saigon from the Central Highlands in the north and the coastal lowlands in the northeast. Under direct order from Le Duan and Giap, Tra was to use these three divisions to attack Xuan Loc to clear this choke point for NVA divisions rushing down from the north and the northeast.⁴⁹ At the same time, the rest of COSVN was to try to cut off Route 4 connecting Saigon with the Mekong Delta.⁵⁰ Thus, Hanoi’s objective was to isolate and cut off Saigon defense forces from the Delta and defeat them in detail. Another objective was to prevent a retreat of Saigon forces to the Mekong Delta to create an enclave defense. It was only three weeks later that the bulk of the NVA invasion forces could arrive in the Saigon area, together with their supplies, for a final assault.⁵¹

In addition to the coordinated strikes of forces-in-place in different areas of operations (i.e. over the whole theater), there was also, at the operational level, a strict coordination between forces striking deep inside the operational depth of the enemy and the main assault forces on the front line. During Tet in 1968, the seizure of key military and political targets inside Saigon was carried out by specialized forces and small raiding detachments in conjunction with attacks on the major defensive strongholds on the outskirts of Saigon. This principle of “attacking on the rear to collapse the front” (or, more metaphorically, “blossoming lotus”) was also applied to the offensive in the Central Highlands in 1975. It was the reason

Hanoi chose to attack Ban Me Thuot in the rear of Kontum and Pleiku to collapse ARVN forces in the front, in conjunction with communist forces poised on the outside (see Map 3).⁵² In the battle of Ban Me Thuot, the disruption of South Vietnamese defense in depth was achieved not only through the actions of forward detachments and specialized forces, but also by the use of tank forces to complete the breakthrough and deeply penetrate the operational depth in conjunction with these forward units.⁵³

In summary, the principles underlying Hanoi's strategy during the war encompassed the two spatial syntheses and a unique version of the blitzkrieg in its timing. Each of these syntheses contained inseparable components which relied on each other for support. To maintain the integrity and maximize the effectiveness of each part of the syntheses required the preservation of all of their components. To prevent the working of these syntheses, then, one needed to sever the connections between each component, since



Map 3. The NVA Offensives in the Central Highlands in 1972 and 1975.

In 1972, three NVA divisions were blocked at Kontum after they had managed to overrun Dak To. The attackers were beaten back with the help of US airpower.

In 1975, three NVA divisions (including the 320th Division) secretly bypassed Kontum and Pleiku to attack Ban Me Thuot after isolating the city by blocking off Routes 14 and 21. After the fall of Ban Me Thuot, Thieu ordered a retreat from Kontum and Pleiku. Route 7 was chosen for surprise because it was a long-unused road and Route 19 was cut off. The 320th Division, however, managed to catch up with the retreating ARVN units and cut them up. The remaining divisions in Pleiku and Ban Me Thuot then pushed toward the coast.

the sum total of the parts was much less than the whole. To concentrate solely on the big-unit war or on population control, therefore, was to allow these syntheses to continue without disruption.

ALTERNATIVE COUNTER-STRATEGIES

Tra's assessment of allied strategy follows directly from the logic of communist theory about the war. The greatest common mistake on the American and South Vietnamese side, Tra stated, was the strategy of "defending the whole country," trying to secure and control every nook and cranny of South Vietnam.⁴ This strategy played right into the hands of Hanoi, because the essence of communist strategy was to "stretch and pull" allied defense forces as thin as possible and then to strike on the weak links at a time and place of their own choosing.⁵ Therefore, throughout the war allied strategy allowed the basic forward deployment and strategic disposition of communist forces, and in turn prevented the development at any one place of a coherent, consolidated defense line, i.e. a war with fronts.

Search and Destroy Strategy

To some extent, it can be argued that General Westmoreland's search and destroy strategy did succeed in pushing communist main forces from their bases of operations in the jungled mountains of South Vietnam after 1968 and thus severed the links between them and local forces in the populated areas in the lowlands. Together with the decimation of the Viet Cong ranks in 1968, the solid shield of American and South Vietnamese divisions along the border with Cambodia and Laos allowed an unprecedented period of security in the countryside. Yet the Viet Cong infrastructure, the political wing of the Viet Cong, continued its activities and thus formed a nucleus for future guerrilla operations. As it turned out, "the elimination of the VCI proved to be a task much more difficult than the destruction of enemy combat units."⁶ It was only a matter of time

before the communist main forces tried to reenter South Vietnamese territories from their bases in Cambodia and Laos to reestablish their links with the lowlands. In fact, this was precisely what the communists had in mind during the 1972 offensive, as Tra himself admitted. Again, the offensive in the jungles and mountains along the length of South Vietnam drew away government forces and left a gaping hole in the countryside for the communist anti-pacification campaign to exploit. This basic objective explained the communist method of attacking on all three fronts at once, since it allowed the reestablishment of the intricate formation Hanoi had always desired. Had Hanoi wanted to occupy as much territory as possible for a negotiated partition of South Vietnam, then it would have made sense for communist divisions to concentrate their attacks in the northern quarters.⁷

Although search and destroy operations from 1968 to 1971 did succeed in temporarily disrupting communist bases of operations, they could not prevent the infiltration of small units into the deltas to support guerrillas there. Moreover, they failed to stop communist main forces from returning to their former sanctuaries when insufficient allied forces were stationed there to prevent it. Operations Cedar Falls and Junction City in 1967 against the Iron Triangle and War Zone C amply demonstrated this fact. According to Tra himself, whose COSVN forces and command center were the key targets of this campaign, his favorite tactic when faced with such an imminent massive assault was to disperse his large units from the area to reassemble at a chosen time and place for a counteroffensive.⁸ To harass and slow the assaulting forces right at the edges of his sanctuaries, Tra would leave behind snipers and light infantry units. To preserve whatever they could of their logistic channels, logistic units would stay behind together with the VC infrastructure to undertake their own defense while holding onto these channels. Tra claimed that these tactics allowed COSVN forces to mount a prompt counteroffensive against units of the 1st and 25th Infantry, and

the 1st Cavalry Divisions, as well as the Tet Offensive in 1968—Tra's answer to General Westmoreland." According to General Hay of the Big Red One, COSVN forces were not destroyed because it was "extremely difficult" to establish an impenetrable seal against infiltration by VC units "thoroughly familiar with the dense jungle terrain."⁶⁰ His assistant, General Rogers, also noted that the option to fight belonged to the enemy because of this, and that soon afterward, "the Iron Triangle was again literally crawling with what appeared to be Viet Cong."⁶¹ Bringing the war to the jungle thus meant fighting the communist main forces in terrain entirely favorable to them.

In 1970, the Cambodian incursion again succeeded only in temporarily disrupting COSVN bases near the border, moving their sanctuaries into northeastern Cambodia.⁶² Pushing the communist main forces from their bases along the jungled mountains of South Vietnam so that pacification could proceed successfully in the lowlands and deltas was an entirely laudable goal. But it could be achieved only at enormous costs in providing firepower and logistic support for combat units, and it required overwhelming superiority in manpower.⁶³ When this superiority could no longer be achieved, then the mobile, big-unit war could be continued only at the expense of territorial security in the rear.

In fact, Hanoi viewed "this contradiction between population and territorial control and mobile combat" as a common affliction for both the Americans and the South Vietnamese.⁶⁴ This assessment of allied strategic weakness was a recurrent motif during the war. Nevertheless, US superior firepower and mobility helped alleviate this "contradiction," for, as South Vietnamese General Cao Van Vien pointed out, these were "the very things that helped maintain tactical balance against an enemy who held the initiative."⁶⁵ In fact, General Vien added, "the ability to hold territory [South Vietnamese strategists] felt, was a direct function of aid level."⁶⁶

After 1973, with the withdrawal of US air and combat support and the steep

reduction in the mobility and firepower of ARVN, this "contradiction" reached an acute phase. In Tra's view, Thieu's strategy of "trying to hold onto every hamlet and village" to deny the communists control of any populous area spread his forces too thin throughout the country and kept them on the defensive.⁶⁷ Moreover, this strategy gave rise to a serious depletion of a mobile strategic reserve to counter communist probes around Saigon and the repenetration of the NVA and VC main forces into the Delta in 1974. It also prevented the massing of enough forces to attack the enemy in any one direction without the fear of being exposed in another.⁶⁸ And when a weak spot in the defense was overrun, like the case of Phuoc Long at the end of 1974, there were no reserves left to rescue the defenders. As a result, throughout 1974, along the entire length of South Vietnam, there was no consolidated enclave of defense to prevent communist infiltrations and probings.

The Strategy of Defense with Mobile Regional Forces

The South Vietnamese solution to this problem of depleting a mobile reserve due to the commitment to hold territory was to upgrade the Regional Forces to carry out a dual function. According to General Vien, the plan was to establish:

mobile regional group commands, each capable of controlling from two to four Regional Force battalions and one four-piece artillery battery relieved from territorial duties The JGS [Joint General Staff] plan called for the activation of twenty-seven such groups by June 1975. This effort was intended to free regular divisions from territorial concerns and give the military regions a sizable combat force to confront enemy territorial units.⁶⁹

These mobile regional groups, therefore, would be involved in both territorial security missions and mobile combat to support or reinforce the ARVN divisions in the military region. However, General Truong considered the plan as being implemented too late:

This should have been done in 1971, when most U.S. infantry divisions had been withdrawn and the enemy was grouping the local forces into battalions and regiments and preparing for mobile conventional warfare If we had achieved this at that time, then ARVN infantry divisions would not have found themselves overextended when replacing U.S. units being redeployed. They could have become more mobile and would have constituted a formidable deterrent to invasion.⁷²

The creation of such dual forces proficient in both anti-guerrilla and mobile conventional warfare clearly was not an easy task, especially when these battalion-sized units were previously used for defending outposts and in guard duties. However, the peculiar form of warfare in Vietnam, with the three types of communist forces, called for such intermediate forces on the South Vietnamese side. In fact, these mobile regional groups were similar in concept to the French *Groupeement Mobile* during the First Indochina War. Jean Ferrandi, the French G-2 officer in Hanoi during the war, saw these forces as General De Lattre's response in 1951 to the new "mobile warfare stage" that Giap's forces were entering. In De Lattre's conception, these units would be flexible and mobile enough to be capable of "being engaged at any point in the territory and then ensuring incessantly growing security on our rear."⁷³ He also ordered the construction of a series of fortified outposts around the perimeter of the Red River Delta—the famous De Lattre Line—to control Vietminh infiltration into the Delta and create an enclave of defense. The "mobile groups" would be available for reinforcement anywhere an attack should occur.

The Enclave Strategy

De Lattre's concept brings one to another alternative strategy proposed during the war by General James Gavin in 1965-66. The idea was "to hold several enclaves on the coast, where sea and air power can be made fully effective. By enclaves I suggest Cam

Ranh Bay, Da Nang, and similar areas where American bases are being established."⁷⁴ Otherwise, he argued, presciently, "in almost the same words that Tra would use years later, "we are stretching current U.S. resources beyond reason in our endeavors to secure the entire country of South Vietnam from the Vietcong penetration. This situation, of course, is caused by the growing Vietcong strength."⁷⁵ According to Gavin's biographer, he also envisioned highly mobile defense forces which would move out from their enclaves on the coast to patrol the periphery, secured against attacks by the use of new weaponry and systems.⁷⁶

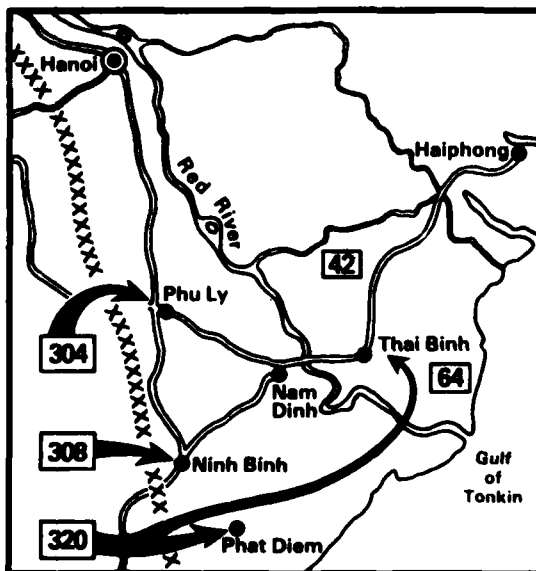
General Tra himself mentioned what he called "the Gavin plan," designating a strategy of gradual retreat from overextended territories to set up an enclave defense around the Mekong Delta, in the worst circumstances.⁷⁷ In fact, what the communist high command and leadership feared most about Thieu's counterplan in 1974, Tra revealed, was a resort to an enclave strategy to consolidate a defense line around the Mekong Delta, with the back of the enclave facing the coast, close to the support of American naval air power.⁷⁸ This was exactly what some leaders in South Vietnam envisioned early in 1974 when it became clear that US support for the war would be on the wane. Prime Minister Khiem and General Vien began to push for "truncation," which eventually would involve a pullback from the Central Highlands and the northern coastal provinces and an evacuation of the population in the areas concerned.⁷⁹ Thieu rejected the plan outright only to come back to it in March 1975 after the fall of Ban Me Thuot, when, according to both the communist General Tra and the South Vietnamese General Vien, that strategic retreat was already too late.

The communist leaders in Hanoi were sufficiently concerned about this plan to order a step-up in the anti-pacification campaign in the Delta even during the rainy season of 1974 and to push communist control of the area back to the 1968 level.⁸⁰ Tra clearly felt that the anti-pacification efforts during 1973-74 had paid off well enough to the communists to foil the

development of the enclave strategy. By the time Thieu tried to implement this strategy in late March 1975, Tra's forces were already locked deep in the Mekong Delta because of their earlier successes in repenetrating and expanding areas under their control in 1974. In 1973-74, despite his realization that the Mekong Delta campaigns were "essential to the survival of South Vietnam," Thieu could not commit enough forces to root out communist bases of operations and solidify control there, especially in the swampy areas west of the Mekong River. Moreover, having lost the outer defense line in northern War Zone C to Tra's forces, Thieu should have tried to close the gaps in the middle defense line north and west of Saigon, two areas Tra repeatedly exploited to tie down the bulk of III Corps forces there. The defense of the northern quarters pinned down South Vietnam's best divisions and depleted her mobile strategic reserves, leaving them in a position to be cut off from the south. The faulty disposition of South Vietnamese forces thus made them vulnerable to Hanoi's strategy in 1975, which did not aim at a frontal attack to win by attrition but a decisive strike on the rear to collapse the front. In 1975, an offensive for "total collapse" completely foiled any hope for the realization of a "Gavin plan" by South Vietnam in 1975."

The success of an enclave defense, therefore, depended on the ability by the defense forces to defeat this principle of "attacking in the rear to collapse the front," first in parts and then in totality. In terrain unfavorable for the deployment of large units and lacking control of the lines of communication (such as the Mekong Delta, and during the First Indochina War, the Red River Delta), communist main force units were adept at breaking into smaller units to infiltrate through the outer defense line and then regroup for a strike at a command center or a town. This usually was done in conjunction with bigger units poised on the outside. This method lay behind communist offensives against the deltas and cities during the Vietminh campaign against the southern

edge of the Red River Delta in 1951, Tet in 1968 against the cities, and the final offensive in 1975 against Ban Me Thuot and Saigon. The Day River Campaign in 1951 against the De Lattre Line illustrated the success of an enclave strategy against such tactics (see Map 4). Achieving a measure of surprise, two Vietminh divisions attacked two strong outposts on the southern edge of the De Lattre Line to allow the 320th Division, commanded by General Van Tien Dung, to infiltrate into the southern part of the Delta to occupy the Catholic diocese of Phat Diem and disrupt French control of the area together with two Vietminh regiments previously infiltrated. The 320th Division, then, was to regroup and push back for an attack on the outer line. The offensive was



Map 4. The Battle for Control of the Southern Red River Delta.

Two Vietminh divisions attacked the French strongholds at Phu Ly and Ninh Binh, while another, the 320th Division, slipped through the De Lattre Line (xxx) to occupy the Catholic diocese of Phat Diem. The 64th Regiment of the 320th Division, having infiltrated previously into Thai Binh, joined the independent 42nd Regiment to attack outposts and disrupt French control in the area. The 320th Division began to regroup and push back toward the De Lattre Line. Three French mobile groups were sent in to reinforce the southern area and push back the Vietminh units. Vietminh casualties were heavy, but both General Leclerc and General De Lattre lost their sons during the battle.

foiled because *Groupeement Mobile* reinforcements prevented the taking of the two strong outposts and the exposed 320th Division was cut up by another such mobile group." General Van Tien Dung again applied this "blossoming lotus" principle in Ban Me Thuot in 1975, this time with more success because of overwhelming superiority. The Day River Campaign, however, pointed out the importance of rooting out the internal infrastructure that allowed infiltrated main force units to roam about and regroup through its support. Moreover, the shield on the outside had to be solid and constantly reinforced by a mobile defense force. The lines of communication had to be well protected through a series of fortified outposts, as the success against NVA main force units in the Mekong in 1975 indicated. Last but not least, there had to be dual-function mobile groups to deal with both the guerrillas and the regrouped main force units inside the shield, in addition to more conventional forces to counter the big units on the outside. It is interesting to note that De Lattre's strategy foiled Giap's offensive on the Red River Delta in 1951, until he decided to bring the war to the mountains in 1952, which allowed the 320th and 316th Divisions to infiltrate again and occupy a swath of land posing as a dagger toward Hanoi."

If Saigon had managed to realize its enclave strategy before the communist offensive in 1975, the question remains as to whether this truncated version of South Vietnam would have survived a determined communist onslaught. Some of the discussions that Tra had with the Politburo at the beginning of 1975 shed some light on the issue. According to Tra, Le Duc Tho, Kissinger's counterpart at the Paris peace talks, told him that Hanoi's materiel reserves were extremely thin, that because of the "complicated internal and external situations" they could not be much increased, and hence that an offensive for a decisive victory must take place by 1976 because Hanoi "should not and cannot prolong the war like before."²² The most important objective, Tho said, was to prevent the successful development of an enclave strategy.²³ One

can infer that Hanoi feared that the enclave strategy would involve a stalemate, which it wanted to avoid at all costs. In a following meeting with the Politburo, Truong Chinh, currently the second-ranked member of the Politburo, expressed concerns about the "enemy's tendency towards an enclave strategy centered around large cities," and he was afraid the communist forces could not penetrate these consolidated defense lines, especially with American support from the air, even on a limited level.²⁴ The optimists, represented by Le Duan and Le Duc Tho, discounted the possibility of American intervention after Watergate. The offensive in 1975 was then approved.

IN CONCLUSION

If only one lesson were to be learned from the Vietnam War, then the thesis convincingly argued by Tra deserves to be remembered: America and South Vietnam lost the war *because their military strategy was wrong*. Stark and direct as this message may be, coming as it does from an experienced protagonist, it should not be taken lightly. And if one believes that the war constituted a new "mode" of warfare, as the other side seems to believe, then one should look at the war from now on through this new lens.

To repeat, it was a war of "syntheses": a synthesis of the three types of forces on the one hand, and the three strategic areas on the other. These syntheses worked, in the final analysis, to shape South Vietnamese force dispositions for the final strike for "total collapse." Even though the big-unit war in the jungles and mountains was decisive, Hanoi clearly considered the revolutionary war in the lowlands as *indispensable* to the success of the former.

The importance of the war in the lowlands can be seen by the way Hanoi sent its own best and brightest into the two Indochina wars. The ones who eventually rose to the top were the commanders in the lowlands. General Van Tien Dung, the commander of the 320th Division haunting the southern Red River Delta, became Giap's

replacement. Likewise, General Le Duc Anh, the little-known commander of communist forces in the areas west of the Mekong River, directed the Vietnamese forces that invaded Cambodia in 1978 and became an important Politburo member. Hanoi clearly valued the skills of generals who could apply the three types of forces to fight this peculiar form of warfare. On this point, Tra had the final word:

A general in the current era, an era of revolution and science . . . not only has to know how to deploy his available forces in the most sensible formation but also to create his forces, organize them into different types of forces with different modes of combat. He needs to know how to combine every type of forces, military and political, internal and external. He has to know not just to deploy his forces for a frontal assault but also to strike the enemy in the rear.⁶¹

NOTES

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1. Walter S. Dillard, *Sixty Days to Peace: Implementing the Paris Peace Accords, Vietnam 1973* (Washington: National Defense Univ. Press, 1982), p. 58.

2. General Tran Van Tra, *Ket Thuc Cuoc Chien Tranh 30 Nam (Ending the Thirty Years' War)* (Ho Chi Minh City: Literature Publishing House of Ho Chi Minh City, 1982).

3. After 1975, Tra became the commander of Vietnamese forces around Saigon and the areas near the border with Cambodia. In March 1978, he became Vice Minister of Defense, whereas his deputy, General Le Duc Anh, later would command the invasion forces in Cambodia. Tra was made a member of the Central Military-Party Committee in 1979, as well as Deputy Chief of General Staff in 1980, until his removal from the Central Committee in 1982, reportedly over differences on policies toward Cambodia.

4. In addition to Tra's book, a number of articles on the Vietnam War written by other senior commanders have recently appeared in a military journal designed for an audience of middle and high-ranking officers. The most notable articles include General Hoang M. Thao's account of the 1972 offensive in the Central Highlands, "Planning a Battle," *Tap Chi Quan Doi Nhan Dan* (Journal of the People's Army—hereinafter *TCQDND*) (May 1983); General Pham H. Son, "Several Problems Concerning Warfare in Jungled Mountain Terrain," *TCQDND* (February 1983); and an account of the air defense of Hanoi during the Christmas bombing in 1972 by General Hoang V. Khanh, "Creativity: An Important Cause for the Victory," *TCQDND* (November 1982).

5. For a concise discussion of revolutionary war, see Sir Robert Thompson, *Revolutionary War in World Strategy 1945-1969* (London: Secker and Warburg, 1970), pp. 16-17.

6. *Some Lessons and Non-Lessons of Vietnam: A Conference Report*, (Washington: Woodrow Wilson International Center for Scholars, 1983), pp. 32-38.

7. Tra, pp. 90, 136; see also the articles signed by Q. S., "Military Strategy," *TCQDND* (September 1981); and "Operations and Operational Art," *TCQDND* (November 1981).

8. For a discussion on communist military organizations in Vietnam, see Colonel Hoang Ngoc Lung, *Intelligence* (Washington: Indochina Monographs, US Army Center of Military History, 1976), p. 87.

9. After Tet, North Vietnamese troops became fillers to reinforce local guerrillas rather than the reverse.

10. Tra, p. 67.

11. *Ibid.*, pp. 136-39.

12. General Ngo Quang Truong, *Territorial Forces* (Washington: Indochina Monographs, US Army Center of Military History), p. 90.

13. Phan Nhat Nam, *Doc Duong So 1 (Along Route 1)* (Saigon: Dai Nga Publishing House, 1970). This war diary by an ARVN paratroop officer contains many interesting anecdotes and incidents that tell volumes about the way US and South Vietnamese troops fought the VC and NVA. His chapter about a joint operation with the US Marines, for example, highlighted the inappropriate tactics used against the VC by these American units in 1967. Marines would march in assault formation in inappropriate terrain. Landing zones for supplies became easy targets for VC mortars. In short, they did so many predictable things that the VC easily learned the habits of action of these units to lure them into traps and sniper fire. On the South Vietnamese side, every time a bridge near a district headquarters was destroyed by sappers, the military region would send down a reserve paratroop battalion for a fruitless sweep of the area for fear of a wider attack plan behind it.

14. Tra, pp. 61, 70, and 72.

15. Truong, pp. 90-94.

16. Tra, p. 88.

17. General Cao Van Vien, *The Final Collapse* (Washington: US Army Center of Military History, 1983), p. 29.

18. *Ibid.*, p. 20.

19. Richard A. Hunt, "Strategies at War: Pacification and Attrition in Vietnam," in *Lessons from an Unconventional War*, ed. Richard A. Hunt and Richard H. Schultz, Jr. (New York: Pergamon Press, 1982), p. 42.

20. Tra, p. 260.

21. *Ibid.*, p. 63.

22. *Ibid.*

23. Tra noted that a famous tactic by the 3rd Brigade of the US 9th Division, known to the local VC as "hop and probe," was to use small units on low-flying helicopters, suddenly swooping down on the suspected VC infrastructure or guerrilla activities and raining fire on them, then taking off quickly to escape. Tra sent his main force regiment to Long An to protect the VC infrastructure against such pacification campaigns. General Ewell (commander of the US forces in Long An and other provinces in the III Corps area) was skeptical of pacification operations because they yielded lower body counts than search and destroy sweeps. (Quoted in Hunt, p. 42.) Had he known that Tra was under direct order from Hanoi to try to protect the Long An VC infrastructure, he might have thought otherwise.

24. On this point, Tra stated that good generalship consisted of "deploying available forces in a cohesive strategic disposition . . . to allow them to exploit the opportunity to divide and disperse the enemy forces so that when strong they become weak and when many they become few." See Tra, pp. 169-70.

25. Quoted in Jack Shulimson, *U.S. Marines in Vietnam: An Expanding War, 1966* (Washington: History and Museums Division, Headquarters, US Marine Corps, 1982), p. 12.

26. Comment by General Krulak, Commander of Marine Forces in the Pacific, cited in Shulimson.

27. Truong, p. 21.

28. Tra, pp. 90, 136.

29. *Ibid.*, p. 91.

30. Ibid., p. 90.
31. Ibid.
32. Ibid., p. 92.
33. Ibid., p. 95.
34. Ibid.
35. Ibid., pp. 134-35.
36. Ibid.; also see the chapter on Westmoreland in Robert Pisor, *The End of the Line: The Siege of Khe Sanh* (New York: W. W. Norton and Company, 1982). The month before Tet, 50 percent of US combat troops were drawn to the I Corps area because Westmoreland was concerned about the threat there posed by NVA divisions, particularly in Khe Sanh.
37. Ibid., p. 111.
38. Truong, p. 82.
39. Tra, p. 218.
40. Sun Tzu, *The Art of War*, trans. and with an introduction by Samuel B. Griffith (New York: Oxford Univ. Press, 1963), pp. 91-92.
41. Ibid., p. 91.
42. Vien, pp. 138-40. Similarly, the 22nd Division in Binh Dinh was unable to redeploy to stem the communist offensive in the Central Highlands.
43. Pisor.
44. Although Tra admitted that the VC suffered heavy losses during Tet, he still considered it "a strategic turning point," at which "American limited war strategy was defeated," forcing the US to deescalate. Tra, p. 47.
45. Lung, p. 145.
46. Tra, p. 147, also p. 206.
47. Ibid., p. 206; see also pp. 57-58 and p. 101 for comments on Tet.
48. Ibid., p. 147.
49. Ibid., pp. 228, 258. In their rush to move down the Central Highlands and along the coast toward Saigon, the NVA divisions experienced a tremendous logistical headache. Units would arrive without their ammunition; tanks ran out of fuel; and artillery units were short of shells! Hardly the picture of a blitzkrieg army in the usual sense.
50. Tra was unhappy with this order by Le Duan and Giap. He thought that the muddy terrain there and the strongly fortified outposts on Route 4 put his light infantry divisions in the Mekong at a disadvantage. In fact, the communists were pushed back from Route 4, suffering heavy casualties. Tra, p. 230.
51. By then the battle was almost decided. Tra had his artillery units with their deadly 130mm guns within range of Saigon and the airport, which were surrounded except from the south and southeast.
52. Ibid., pp. 182-83. Originally, the General Staff's plan in Hanoi was to concentrate the NVA offensive on the Central Highlands but did not envision an attack on Ban Me Thuot. Tra was dismayed when he found out during a discussion on the forthcoming plan in Hanoi that the offensive was centered on Kontum and Pleiku, the defensive strongholds of the ARVN in the Central Highlands. These defense positions were stationed extremely close to the NVA infiltration routes from the Ho Chi Minh Trail. The intention of the General Staff in Hanoi was to engage these defense forces in an attrition battle, since the NVA had numerical superiority and the advantage of an interior line of communication, whereas reinforcements for ARVN units could be blocked off on Route 19 (see Map 3). Doing so, Tra argued, would play right into the hands of Saigon because the ARVN positions were strongly defended and well stocked. Moreover, the plan reflected a "conventional war" mentality, whereas the communist forces should have exploited the ability to infiltrate into the rear by bypassing Kontum and Pleiku to strike at Ban Me Thuot, and thus indirectly collapse the front. According to Tra, he interceded with Pham Hung, the southern party secretary, to dissuade the Politburo from approving this plan. At the last moment, when the final Central Military-Party Committee meeting was taking place to hammer out the offensive plan, Politburo member Le Duc Tho entered with an explicit order to focus the attack on Ban Me Thuot.
53. During the 1975 offensive, these tank units could achieve a speed of advance of up to 50 to 60 kilometers a day and thus disrupted the efforts by South Vietnamese forces to reorganize and consolidate their defense. See Colonel Le X. Kien, "The Potential for Rapid Attack by Tank Forces in Modern Offensive Operations," *TCQDND* (August 1982).
54. Tra, p. 112.
55. Ibid., pp. 110-12.
56. General Tran Dinh Tho, *Pacification* (Washington: Indochina Monographs, US Army Center of Military History), p. 11.
57. General Cao Van Vien, the South Vietnamese chief of the Joint Staff, stated that South Vietnam "would have been much better off with a reduced but not infested territory . . . two clean-cut zones instead of the purulent spots of the 'leopard skin.'" See Vien, p. 81.
58. Tra, p. 105.
59. These attacks occurred mainly in October 1967, a few months after the end of Junction City. They included an ambush against a battalion of the Big Red One, an attack on Phuoc Long, and a division-sized attack on Loc Ninh, a district capital north of An Loc. The last attack was later considered a trial run for Tet to test combat tactics against towns and cities.
60. General Bernard W. Rogers, *Cedar Falls-Junction City: A Turning Point* (Washington: Department of the Army, 1974), p. 155.
61. Ibid., pp. 157-58.
62. General Tran Dinh Tho, *The Cambodian Incursion* (Washington: Indochina Monographs, US Army Center of Military History, 1978), p. 175.
63. According to General Murray, the US logistic chief in Vietnam in 1974, at the height of the US involvement in Vietnam there were 433 allied combat battalions fighting 60 enemy combat regiments (somewhat larger than an allied battalion). In 1974, ARVN had 189 battalions against 110 enemy regiments, see *Some Lessons and Non Lessons*, p. 38.
64. Tra, p. 188.
65. Vien, p. 7.
66. Ibid.
67. Tra, pp. 97, 111.
68. Ibid., pp. 105, 110.
69. Vien, p. 43.
70. Truong, p. 45.
71. Jean Ferrandi, *Les Officiers Francais Face au Vietnam, 1945-1954* (Paris: Fayard, 1966), p. 152.
72. General James M. Gavin, "A Communication on Vietnam," *Harper's*, 232 (February 1966), 17.
73. Ibid.
74. Bradley Biggs, *Gavin: A Biography of General James M. Gavin* (Hamden, Conn.: Archon Books, 1980), pp. 148-49.
75. Tra, p. 145.
76. Ibid.
77. Frank Snepp, *Decent Interval* (New York: Random House, 1977), pp. 104, 109, and 156.
78. Tra, pp. 128, 160.
79. Ibid., p. 146.
80. Ferrandi, p. 167.
81. Ibid., p. 182.
82. Tra, p. 161.
83. Ibid.
84. Ibid., p. 188.
85. Ibid., p. 170.



CAMPAIGN PLANNING

by

WILLIAM R. WILLIAMSON

Since the advent of the efforts to revise the 1 July 1976 edition of FM 100-5 (*Operations*), increasingly greater attention has been focused on the importance of a campaign plan in conducting large-unit operations. This was an important change because during the last three decades, the concept of a campaign plan as a critical element in theater operations had significantly diminished. During these decades, the use of this term and the product it denotes were relegated almost totally to the joint arena.

Campaign planning was found to have great utility during previous wars up to and including World War II. The result of this planning, the campaign plan, was a crucial document in which the theater commander could communicate his view of how military resources would be employed over a period of weeks or months to accomplish theater objectives. The recognition of its cruciality and the increasing focus on the operational level of war brought about by the revision of FM 100-5 necessitates a better comprehension of the campaign plan, how it fits in our hierarchy of plans, and what purposes it may serve.

At the outset, it is important to recognize that there is a variety of definitions for a campaign plan. This variation and the brevity of these different definitions contribute to the ambiguity surrounding the term, as seen in these extracts from principal source documents:

- JCS Pub 1: "A plan for a series of related military operations aimed to accomplish a common objective, normally within a given time and space."

- FM 100-5: "Sustained operations designed to defeat an enemy force in a

specified space and time with simultaneous and sequential battles."²

- JCS Pub 2: "A device used by major commands to express the commander's decision in terms of specific operations projected as far into the future as practicable Its purpose is to express an orderly schedule of the strategic decisions made by the commander to allow sufficient time to procure and provide the means to secure desired or assigned objectives."

TIERS OF PLANNING

First, let us consider where the campaign plan fits in the planning process. The ultimate source of military plans can be traced to national-level decisions made within the National Security Council process. From these decisions come not only a national military strategy but also additional guidance on priorities, forces, timing, and other planning assumptions. These decisions are amplified by the Secretary of Defense. The Joint Chiefs of Staff further develop these decisions in the operational planning realm through the use of the Joint Strategic Capabilities Plan (JSCP). The JSCP, which is revised biennially and updated in the off-year, provides guidance to the unified and specified commanders (CINCs) for the development of Operation Plans (OPLANS) and Concept Plans (CONPLANS) to be used in the event of possible employment of military power to protect US interests and attain strategic objectives.

As each CINC responds to the guidance and taskings in the JSCP, he must decide early how operations will be conducted within his command or, in the case of a unified commander, within his theater. Assisted by

the strategic guidance and his view of how the war will be conducted within his theater, the commander develops an operational concept. This operational concept not only becomes the basis for the development of the Operation Plans tasked by the JSCP, but also leads to the development of a campaign plan for the theater.

The JSCP-derived Operation Plans serve the principal purpose of focusing the efforts of a number of unified and specified commanders to insure that military resources arrive in the theater at the time and place which will best support the theater commander's operational concept. In many ways, then, these Operation Plans become predominantly deployment plans. Their principal focus is on the strategic mobility problem and less on the problem of effectively employing military resources once they have arrived within the theater. This differentiation is useful and practical since deployment requires careful coordination between several unified and specified commanders whereas employment usually falls within the total purview of the theater commander.

For employment planning, the CINC translates his operational concept into a more elaborate statement of how operations will be conducted within the theater once the military resources have arrived. This statement is the campaign plan. It should describe the general conduct of operations within the theater over the period of time required to achieve the theater objectives. However, it will only include those operations which the theater commander is able to effectively visualize. Thus in the case of a major conflict the campaign plan may not describe the full period of time required to win the war, but rather only those operations conducted to achieve intermediate theater objectives. The winning of the war may require a sequence of campaign plans which are successively prepared as critical aspects come into better focus. In some cases where the theater is geographically large, several campaign plans may be prepared and executed not only sequentially, but also in parallel. This is

especially true where the theater commander has chosen to use several lines of action.

The possibility of several separate lines of action leads to the distinction between a theater of war and theaters of operations. The theater of war is the total land, sea, and air space that is or may become involved directly in the military operations. In the case of large areas, a theater of war may be divided into theaters of operations. The theater of operations is that portion of a theater of war necessary for military operations to achieve an assigned mission and for the support incident to these operations.⁴ The theater of operations may well include not only land but also sea and air space. An illustration in today's context would be the Allied Command Europe. Because of its size and diversity, this theater of war is divided into separate theaters of operations: Allied Forces Northern Europe, Allied Forces Central Europe, and Allied Forces Southern Europe. Not only would the Allied Command Europe prepare a campaign plan, but each of the three commanders of the theaters of operations would prepare one. These three subordinate plans would be thoroughly coordinated and submitted to the theater commander. Then, should war come, they would be synchronized and ready for execution in parallel.

Better clarification of these points may be found in historical examples. Operations conducted in the Pacific during World War II

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were essentially along two separate lines of action. General MacArthur developed a campaign plan for his island-hopping operations leading to the Philippines, and Admiral Nimitz developed a separate but parallel campaign plan for his deep-water approach to Japan. Both converged into a subsequent campaign plan that was developed for the seizure and occupation of the Japanese home islands. Allied operations in the Mediterranean should also provide an excellent example of a campaign plan, but they do not. Instead of being guided by a comprehensive longer-term view, planning was conducted operation by operation, with each successive operational stage dictated by political and military developments as they arose.

How then do the Operation Plans that result from the Joint Operations Planning System connect with the operation orders and operation plans developed by the subordinate headquarters within the theater? The link between these two dimensions of planning is the campaign plan. The theater commander's campaign plan not only provides his comprehensive vision of how operations will be conducted within the theater, but it also insures that there is proper synchronization and unity of effort among the various subordinate commands within the theater. With this vision, subordinate commanders begin their planning. Subordinate commanders will not normally prepare orders and plans to cover the entire time span of the theater commander's campaign plan. Rather, they plan in detail and develop orders for those initial actions for which the requisite information is available and which they may be called upon to execute early. For operations that will occur later in the campaign, they develop plans or outline plans. Service component headquarters within the theater, and possibly even the next subordinate headquarters below the component headquarters when the theater is especially well developed, may also find it useful to develop their own campaign plans in order to provide the commander's comprehensive view of the orchestration of operations within his command. As a minimum, though, the

theater commander would develop a campaign plan to guide actions within the theater.

SCOPE

With the position of a campaign plan relative to other types of plans and orders established, it is appropriate to address the thrust and contents of the campaign plan. As mentioned before, a campaign plan prescribes the sequential operations to be conducted within a theater in order to achieve assigned theater objectives. The best description of a campaign plan appears to be that contained in chapter 5 of the 29 July 1983 draft FM 100-15 (*Corps Operations*). The next several paragraphs paraphrase and enlarge upon several sections of that chapter.

In designing his plan the theater commander should visualize the campaign from its beginning to its end. He should base his plan on a specific means of defeating his enemy—making the enemy's position in the theater untenable by destroying his logistic support, defeating his allies, separating his forces, occupying decisive terrain, carrying the war to his homeland, or destroying his fighting forces. The plan must necessarily be flexible and provide latitude for considerable adjustment during its execution, but its aim must be clear. The plan should also be conceptually simple and designed to threaten several areas or forces at once. By presenting the enemy with multiple threats, the commander preserves the initiative, avoids being predictable, and retains the freedom of action necessary to strike at weaknesses as they are identified.

Sun Tzu observed that "a victorious army wins its victories before seeking battle." The campaign plan anticipates battles and disposes forces in ways that create the operational advantages of relative positioning, which influences killing power and speed of action before battle is joined. The anticipated battles will rarely take place exactly as foreseen and may even be avoided if their terms are not acceptable, but the operational dispositions should always facilitate rapid, advantageous commitment of forces to battle.¹

In visualizing the course of his campaign, the theater commander should see beyond the immediate battles. He should consider the enemy's likely direction of withdrawal and the future courses of action open to both forces. He should make tentative plans for the employment of his forces after each series of battles to advance his operational plan as far as possible. Possible local reverses or tactical failures must also be taken into account; their occurrence should not unduly influence the campaign plan.⁶

Campaign planning should aim at the most rapid and least expensive defeat of the enemy. The enemy should be attacked throughout the theater with every means available to weaken him before, during, and after battle. Deception, psychological warfare, airborne and amphibious operations, coordinated naval and air interdiction campaigns, and special operations should all be used to augment the ground campaign.⁷

Successful battles must be parlayed into operational gain whenever possible. The campaign plan must anticipate the necessity for fresh forces to be positioned in order to exploit success and to prevent the enemy from reorganizing and conducting subsequent phases of his operation. Timely commitment of reserve forces to exploit battlefield success may decide the campaign. Critical elements in the art of campaign planning are the commander's ability to anticipate and his sense of timing.

KEY ASPECTS

Beyond this overview, there are specific aspects that should be addressed in the campaign plan in order to insure full understanding and transmit the theater commander's intent. Each of these aspects demands some elaboration.

Assumptions. As with all plans, assumptions are also key to the campaign plan. Assumptions are used by the planner to shape the unknown. In the case of a campaign plan, they may well be developed to address the most likely enemy action, the amount of participation by allied forces, the use of nuclear and chemical weapons, etc.

There is sometimes a tendency to develop assumptions that depict "worst case" situations in an attempt to "safe-side" planning. This is an erroneous approach. Worst-case assumptions often are wasteful of resources and reduce the opportunity to exploit momentary advantages or enemy weaknesses. In the opposite sense, there is sometimes a tendency to adopt facilitating assumptions which assume-away problems. This approach is equally incorrect. In each case assumptions should be developed to depict what the commander's best estimate of reality will be at the time of execution.

Theater Objectives. Theater objectives should be carefully described in the campaign plan so that subordinate commanders will fully understand them. These objectives will then guide the decentralized planning and operations of subordinates, thereby increasing the likelihood that their separate activities will be synchronized as parts of the entire theater effort. Clear statement of the theater objectives also provides overarching guidance for subordinate commanders when immediate actions are required in the absence of specific guidance. Such decentralization converts initiative into agility, allowing rapid reaction to capitalize on fleeting opportunities.

Missions. Missions should be stated in the campaign plan in broad terms, should be general in nature, should cover a considerable period of time, and should leave the details to subordinate commanders. This technique provides maximum flexibility and freedom of action. The assignment of specific terrain objectives should be avoided so as not to inhibit the actions of subordinate commanders. If necessary, general traces using cities and major terrain features may be assigned as objectives.

Phasing. Since the campaign plan presents a longer-term view of operations, it should envision a series of sequential operations. Each of these operations constitutes a potential phase (and sometimes more than one) of the campaign plan. Identified phases provide sequential segments within the campaign plan which allow the focusing of effort. The early phases, because

they are more proximate, contain the greater amount of specific guidance and detail. Phases should be established by identifying transition points between different kinds of operations or by identifying changes in tempo within a particular operation.

Maneuver. The critical problem of the campaign plan is to distribute the available forces where they will do the most good. By assessing enemy capabilities and weaknesses, the theater commander disposes the minimal essential forces in those areas where he does not wish to conduct major operations, thus allowing the concentration of his limited resources in carefully chosen areas where the enemy is least prepared and most exposed. In so doing, head-on encounters are avoided and attacks on flanks and rear areas are maximized. The campaign plan should task-organize forces for each phase of the plan.

Fire Support. Fire support includes the whole range of land, air, and naval capabilities—conventional, chemical, and nuclear. Apportionment of and priorities for these resources should be made in the campaign plan—again, as in maneuver, for each phase. Fire support and maneuver are integral parts of the campaign. The coordinated use of both should characterize every phase of the campaign. Fire support should create opportunities for maneuver, and maneuver should expose enemy forces to the concentration of fires.

Control Measures. For each phase, the campaign plan should specify zones of action for subordinate commanders and, where appropriate, axes of advance. When establishing these control measures, careful attention should be given to the terrain, capabilities and limitations of friendly units, the capabilities of the enemy, and the availability of major lines of communication. These demarcations cannot become inviolate, but rather must be adjustable through adjudication as operations and planning are conducted.

Reserves. Major influence on the campaign is attainable through the careful husbanding and employment of reserves. These reserves may be forces or chemical and

nuclear weapons. They may be assets available at the outset of the campaign, or they may arrive during the campaign. The campaign plan must capitalize on every opportunity that can be anticipated or created to withhold important combat resources in anticipation of delivering a decisive blow to the enemy. By necessity, this will require some portions of the theater to be in an economy-of-force role so that adequate reserves may be created and disposed in anticipation of their commitment. Once again, reserves should be identified for each phase and their anticipated use delineated.

Logistics. Logistics may well regulate the pace of the operations described in the campaign plan. One of the primary considerations at theater level will be the management of logistics. The campaign plan must allot time for logistical buildup prior to the initiation of major operations. It must also designate priorities among subordinate units and provide for the establishment, development, and protection of lines of communication within the theater. Without adequate lines of communication, an aggressive campaign is not possible.

Deception. Given the amounts of military resources involved in a campaign, deception is a necessity in order to conceal the true intentions, capabilities, objectives, and locations of vulnerabilities within the theater. The campaign plan should direct the use of every available resource within the theater in order to project a plausible deception that conceals upcoming operations from the enemy. This will necessarily involve the use of some combat forces to make it convincing. Combat support units and reserve units are well-suited to accomplish deception measures.

Format. The format for a campaign plan may be found in Appendix C of JCS Pub 2, *Unified Action Armed Forces (UNAAF)*.

CONCLUSION

Campaign planning has become somewhat of a lost skill since the end of World War II. In recent years, however, increasing

emphasis has been placed on the importance of campaign planning in the conduct of large-unit operations. Of the definitions offered at the outset, the most useful is that provided in JCS Pub 2:

A device used by major commands to express the commander's decision in terms of specific operations projected as far into the future as practicable . . . Its purpose is to express an orderly schedule of the strategic decisions made by the commander to allow sufficient time to procure and provide the means to secure desired or assigned objectives.¹

However, as with all definitions, this is only a point from which to begin to understand the subject.

I have attempted in this brief article to go beyond the basic definitions in order to promote greater understanding and application of the campaign plan. Its role as a bridge between the Operation Plans derivative of the Joint Operations Planning System and the operation orders and operation plans developed by subordinate units within a theater of war is crucial. Not only does the campaign plan serve as such a bridge, but it

also enables the theater commander to communicate his strategic decisions, priorities, and view of the sequential and simultaneous operations necessary for the theater objectives to be attained. The utility of the campaign plan in allowing the entire force to understand thoroughly the commander's intent is clearly evident. It is through this understanding that subordinate commanders can maximize the basic tenets of FM 100-5: initiative, depth, agility, and synchronization.

NOTES

1. US Joint Chiefs of Staff, *Department of Defense Dictionary of Military and Associated Terms*, JCS Pub 1 (Washington: GPO, 1 June 1979), p. 58.
2. US Department of the Army, *Operations*, Field Manual 100-5 (Washington: GPO, 20 August 1982), p. 2-3.
3. US Joint Chiefs of Staff, *Unified Action Armed Forces (UNAAF)*, JCS Pub 2, with Change 2 (Washington: GPO, 1 December 1975), p. 72.
4. US Department of the Army, *Larger Unit Operations*, Field Manual 100-15 (Test) (Washington: GPO, 15 March 1974), p. 2-1.
5. US Department of the Army, *Corps Operations*, Field Manual 100-15 (Draft) (Washington: GPO, 29 July 1983), p. 5-7.
6. Ibid.
7. Ibid., p. 5-8.
8. JCS Pub 2, p. 72.



COMPARATIVE STRATEGIC CULTURE

by

COLIN S. GRAY

The purpose of this article is to examine a three-part proposition:

- The concept of strategic culture is a useful tool for better understanding ourselves, others, and how others view us.

- Just as cultural awareness can enlighten, so the "fog of culture" can restrict understanding.¹

- Restricted understanding of the strategic culture of others can be very dangerous for international peace and security.

As with many concepts alleged to have explanatory power, strategic culture lends itself to abuse. To be useful it has to be corralled and employed in a disciplined way—or, at the least, it has to be used with an awareness of the pitfalls that await the unwary. Needless to say, perhaps, we are interested not only in strategic culture, in the attitudes and beliefs that flow from a distinctive national experience, but also in national style in behavior.

Discovery of the obvious can be important. Thanks to the rise of the idea and political organization of nation-states, it has long been appreciated (if not infrequently overappreciated) that Frenchmen, Englishmen, and Americans (etc.) had qualities as Frenchmen, Englishmen, and Americans (etc.). Notwithstanding its multinational, and certainly multi-ethnic, foundations, the United States has had a very clear sense of national identity, a sense that there exists a distinct "us" and that all others are "them" (more or less carefully differentiated), while at the same time American strategic thinkers

have tended to be curiously insensitive to possible national differences in modes of strategic thought and behavior.²

American strategists have always known, deep down, that Soviet, French, British, and other approaches to security issues differed from their own in good part because Soviet, French, and British policy-makers were heirs to distinctive national perspectives. It has long been appreciated that those national perspectives should be comprehensible through an appropriate combination of historical, geographical, anthropological, psychological, and sociological study. However, the recognition of national differences has only very rarely moved the US government in its conduct of affairs to take explicit account of the effects of those differences upon policy goals and methods.³ In the late 1970s, American defense commentators discovered what they really had known all along—that the Soviet Union did not appear to share many of the more important beliefs and practices beneficial to the American idea of international order. This should have come as no surprise, but it did. Although the Western strategic literature of the past quarter-century is replete with warnings against the practice of mirror-imaging and projecting American desires and perspectives uncritically upon Moscow, those warnings by and large proceeded unheeded until the late 1970s. At the present time the US defense community is in a situation where it acknowledges the apparent fact of national cultural and stylistic differences—a great advance—but has yet to

determine what those differences should mean for US policy.

Two works lead the way in this field: Jack Snyder's RAND report on *The Soviet Strategic Culture: Implications for Limited Nuclear Operations* (September 1977),⁴ and Ken Booth's book *Strategy and Ethnocentrism* (1979). Neither of these were towering works of scholarship, but like Alfred Thayer Mahan's *The Influence of Sea Power Upon History, 1660-1783*,⁵ they dignified and elevated insight to the level of principle.

The concept of strategic culture is a direct descendant of the concept of political culture—which has been debated, developed, variously employed, and even more variously defined by political scientists since the early 1950s.⁶ The idea of national style is derived logically from the concept of political culture: a particular culture should encourage a particular style in thought and action. One notices, for example, that the Soviet Union frames its defense tasks in ways generally unfamiliar to the United States, and behaves in defense-related matters in a fashion inexplicable in standard American terms. These differences in observable thought and practice have so enduring a character that even when idiosyncratic possibilities are factored out, it is plausible to hypothesize that the Soviet Union has approached, and continues to approach, defense issues in a fairly distinctive Soviet manner—comprehensible only in those terms. In order to understand why the Soviet Union thinks and behaves as it does, it should be useful to seek to trace that thought and behavior to fundamentally influencing factors, always presuming that there are some fundamentally influencing factors. While fully accepting the possible dangers of crude reductionism (if one or more allegedly "determining factors" are identified),⁷ of insensitivity to change (even culture and style will alter over time), and of finding undue cultural distinctiveness (if one looks for that which is culturally different in American terms one is very likely to find it), the potential benefit for the quality of prediction and understanding of defense performance seems to be overwhelming.

It is a fact that the discovery of cultural distinctiveness in strategic thought and practice has been attended, probably inevitably, by an unduly simple appreciation of this dimension to strategic affairs.⁸ As caveats, one should note that:

- Some strategic-cultural traits are common to many supposedly, and even truly, distinctive cultures.

- A strategic culture may accommodate several quite distinctive strategic subcultures (which may have more in common with some foreign strategic cultures than they have with their dominant national culture).

- Many, and probably most, alleged strategic cultural traits are fully rational, in strict *realpolitik* terms, given the perceived historical experience of the nations in question. The strategic cultural thought processes and (derived) behavior of interest here do not, noticeably, rest upon individual psycho-cultural phenomena (e.g. the child-rearing practice of Great Russian mothers and the like).

- From time to time a state may act in ways that represent a break from its traditional, dominant strategic culture.

The strategic culture thesis has its roots in a concern that was flagged informatively by Snyder. He wrote as follows:

It is useful to look at the Soviet approach to strategic thinking as a unique "strategic culture." Individuals are socialized into a distinctively Soviet mode of strategic thinking. As a result of this socialization process, a set of general beliefs, attitudes and behavioral patterns with regard to nuclear strategy has achieved a state of semipermanence that places them on the level of "culture" rather than mere "policy." Of course, attitudes may change as a result of changes in technology and the international environment. However, new problems are not assessed objectively. Rather, they are seen through the perceptual lens provided by the strategic culture.⁹

The intriguing and potentially enlightening idea of strategic culture becomes a

distorting idea when defense commentators research too eagerly, and too uncritically, for the cultural roots of contemporary defense practice. Although one can compare and contrast Soviet with American cultures, the comparison and contrast would often be far less stark were the full range of American and possibly Soviet attitudes to be assessed, as opposed only to the policy-dominant ones.¹⁰ As with sound geopolitical analysis, one discerns through strategic-cultural analysis influences rather than rigid determinants. Nevertheless, contemporary American, Soviet, et al. strategic commentators have to be very much the products of their particular, unique, cultural milieus.

It is hypothesized here that there is a discernible American strategic culture. That culture, referring to modes of thought and action with respect to force, derives from perceptions of the national historical experience, aspirations for cultural conformity (e.g. as an American, what am I and how should I feel, think, and behave?), and from all of the many distinctively American experiences (of geography, political philosophy and practice [i.e. civic culture], and way of life) that determine an American culture.

First, it is suggested here that there is an American (and, *ab extensio*, other) strategic culture which flows from geopolitical, historical, economic, and other unique influences. Second, it is suggested that American strategic culture provides the

milieu within which strategic ideas and defense policy decisions are debated and decided. Third, it is suggested that an understanding of American strategic culture and style can help explain why American policymakers have made the decisions that they have. Moreover, if greater light can thus be shed upon past and present, it may be possible to employ the concept of strategic culture (and style) to predict tendencies in behavior in the future.

It must be admitted that, as yet, it is unclear just how helpful studies of strategic culture may prove to be. However, it does not seem inappropriate to assert at least the following potential benefits:

- An improved understanding of our own, and other, cultures in local terms.
- An improved ability to discern enduring policy motivations and to make predictions.
- An improved ability to communicate what is intended to be communicated.¹¹
- An improved ability to understand the meaning of events in the assessment of others.

A rather obvious danger in this theme lies in the realm of cultural relativism. Soviet drives for further influence abroad need be no less menacing because Americans think they understand what lies behind them. The central problem for the US government is not so much to understand Soviet power as it is to contain that power (which is not to demean the virtue of understanding). Moreover, it is not suggested here, implicitly or explicitly, that American policy necessarily should be changed solely because its frame of conceptual reference may fit poorly with that identified for the USSR.

Virtually by definition, strategic culture and national style have very deep roots within a particular stream of historical experience—as locally interpreted. While it is not assumed that culture and style are immutable—that would be absurd—it is assumed that national patterns of thought and action, the preferred way of coping with problems and opportunities, are likely to

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alter only very gradually, short of a new historical experience which few people can deny warrants a historically discontinuous response. There is not a Russian/Soviet strategic culture and national style that is fixed for all time. The Soviet Union of 1984 is clearly different from the Soviet Union of 1937-38. But, pending some major system shocks, the weight of the past and the way the past is interpreted as a guide (largely implicit) to the present, far outweighs in enduring importance the marginal changes in culture discernible year by year.

It is my contention that major streams of policy decisions in the United States and the Soviet Union cannot simply be explained in terms of the characteristics of particular people, their unique assessment of policy options, and the bureaucratic-political milieus in which they find themselves. It is necessary to consider the strategic culture of the various policymakers. While aberrant, culturally innovative, or just plain eccentric decision-making is always possible, there is a tendency for policymakers of a particular strategic culture to make policy in ways, and substantively, that are congruent with the bounds of that culture. A national style, to endure and attain that status, is a style that "works," well enough, for a particular nation. A national style is not the random product of imaginative thinking by policymakers; instead it is a pattern of national response to challenge which has worked adequately in the past. This really is a truth by definition, because a strategic culture and national style that failed to meet objective tests of adequacy imposed by external security politics would lead inexorably to the political, if not always physical, demise of the nation.

Although strategic-cultural analysis should not incline one to judge that identified American proclivities are inappropriate simply because they are incongruent with the known tendencies of adversaries, neither should one be content to assert complacently that each party simply is what it is. Strategy, in good part, is a matter of adaptation to perceived reality, and some societies have adapted more effectively than others. It is not enough just to note the more persuasive

details of "the American way" and "the Soviet way"; more important is the question of how those ways would likely fare if ever they were tested in direct conflict. To date, at least, the very few studies of comparative strategic culture and style that have appeared have not ventured into the realm of the implications for US policy. The inherent merit of American strategic thinking is not the issue—this is not a contest in intellectual aesthetics—the real issue is how appropriate American ideas (and ideas made into policy) are in a conflict process with a particular adversary.

Much that a country does, or attempts to do, is done for reason of force of circumstance, real or apparent. A central problem with cultural/stylistic explanations of distinctive national thought and behavior is that alternative hypotheses may serve to explain the phenomena in question. The determined and ruthless theorist usually can find impressive *ex post facto* empirical support for his theorizing.

The potential problem of multiple-causation may easily be overstressed. Assessed in isolation, quite a wide range of theories may be invoked to explain American and Soviet defense behavior. To sift these theories for their plausibility and their explanatory power, one needs to engage in cross-cultural analysis. For example, if one has a structural theory of US defense policy behavior that identifies the military-industrial complex and bureaucratic politics as the collective determinant of defense policy output, then how does one account for the fact that the Soviet military-industrial complex, together with Soviet bureaucratic politics, produces a very different policy output? The answer, presumably, has to be that the industrial-bureaucratic-political forces in the two superpowers are differently configured. But, even if this is true, as seems self-evident, one then has to ask why those forces are configured differently. In short, even the "structural-determinist" cannot evade the issue of possible cultural impact upon the analysis.

While there is no great difficulty identifying apparent American, Soviet, British, et al. approaches to national security,

it is less obvious that those different approaches reflect anything more peculiar than a uniqueness of historical and geographic circumstances. In other words, Americans and Russians may be different as individuals in ways of thought, but such differences are not important here. Of interest is state, not individual, behavior, and what is required is an open mind as to the possibility that very different national experiences tend to produce different policy responses.

In asserting, as a hypothesis, that Great Russians think differently about national security issues than do Americans, one need not imply anything about the "curious" psychology of individual Great Russians or Americans. Instead, one may simply imply that the geopolitical inheritance of the two peoples is very different and that that inheritance has (locally) natural, even inevitable, consequences for contemporary assessments of security problems.

It is important that the cultural/stylistic theme not be muddled in appraisal by views on the merits, or shortcomings, of national character analysis. This analysis confines itself to asserting that:

- Each state has a unique, distinctive, history.
- Each state learns (or mislearns) from its assessment of that unique, distinctive history.
- And each state, having a unique, distinctive history, is very likely to learn and mislearn a wisdom for statecraft different from that of other states.

It is not too difficult to find in the history of each state experiences quite closely analogous (at least superficially) to those of many others. For example, following Booth, one can show that the American military experience is sufficiently rich and varied as to cast doubt upon all simple assertions concerning "the American way in war."¹² Many, if not most, allegedly American cultural traits in warfare, and approaches to warfare, can be found elsewhere. Booth is correct. However, in his worthy determination to slay the dragon of myths concerning the convenient metaphor of "American Strategic

Man," he neglects to address the still-valid question, What, if any, are the implications for defense and international security of the unique American geopolitical experience? To be truly useful, the exercise of destruction requires a follow-up, constructive, phase.

It must be emphasized that while understanding across cultural lines is always useful, international security problems cannot be defined solely in terms of misunderstanding. It is desirable that Western policymakers and ordinary citizens understand that the Soviet threat is of an enduring character and has very deep roots in the Russian reaction to its unique historical experience. But the predominant US problem is to contain Soviet power. To the extent that Western policymakers can appreciate that they are dealing with a fundamentally unfriendly culture, rather than with an ephemeral, unfriendly policy, to that extent cultural analysis may help remove illusions and wishful thinking from official deliberations.

It would be difficult to design two countries more likely to misunderstand each other than the United States and the Soviet Union, notwithstanding some macrocosmic similarities between them. Both countries have an unusual degree of insularity in their world views. In the American case there were the facts of oceanic distance isolating the new nation and the deliberate rejection of older models of political organization and practice. In the Russian case there was, and remains, both geographical distance and the security apparatus of the state strictly controlling traffic between Russia and the West. Also, both countries have messianic ideologies, though in the American case the light that was lit on Plymouth Rock was to be a beacon that would inspire by example. The geopolitical basis for Soviet-American rivalry lies in the simple process of great-power elimination. World Wars I and II destroyed Europe's multipolar balance of power. By 1945 the United States was the only country capable of organizing a security system that could restrict the freedom of Soviet policy

action, just as the Soviet Union was the only country capable of threatening to impose an imbalance of power in Europe.¹³

Soviet-American rivalry often can be difficult to explain to a people that is not in the habit of thinking geopolitically.¹⁴ After all, the Soviet Union does not appear to covet American territory, and the threats that it poses to American survival interests flow from the American assumption of security commitments around the periphery of Europe and Asia.¹⁵ The American quarrel with the Soviet Union is of the same kind as the British quarrel with Imperial Germany between 1900 and 1914; the insular power, Great Britain then, the United States today, cannot tolerate the domination of Europe, or of Eurasia, by a single continental power or coalition.¹⁶

The Soviet quarrel with the United States, in terms of geopolitics, is very fundamental, indeed. In Soviet perception the political control the Soviet state exercises over the non-Great Russian regions of the USSR is supported by the firmness of Soviet political control over Eastern Europe. But the political stability of Eastern Europe as an essential part of the Soviet empire is menaced by the attractive power of the independent states of Western Europe, and the security and political independence of Western Europe is underwritten by the United States.¹⁷

Whether Soviet patterns of thought and behavior, culture and style, are more Soviet than Great Russian is a matter of little interest, though a strong case can be advanced to the effect that the Soviet Union today is the Great Russian Empire of yesterday with the overlay of an ideology with global pretensions.

What can be determined concerning Soviet/Russian strategic culture? Key characteristics include the following:

- An insatiable quest for national security that has no boundaries compatible with the security of others. The USSR is seeking total security.

- An assumption that international politics is a permanent struggle for power. War and peace and "war in peace" (cold war)

are but different phases of a continuous process in which countries rise or fall.

- A belief that militarily one cannot be too strong (in Benjamin Lambeth's words, "too much is not enough").¹⁸ One cannot achieve a sufficiency of national military power. The Soviet Union does not acknowledge the idea that their weapons could be a threat to peace, or could promote instability. The Soviet Union has a political and strategic view, rather than a technical view, of what is and what is not stabilizing.

- A confidence in unilateral military prowess and a great unwillingness to repose important security functions in anticipation of restraint on the part of others.¹⁹

- A recognition that war is always possible and that the duty of soldiers is to fight and win, should the politicians make the decision to fight. Soviet strategic culture does not accommodate the idea that the USSR should design its forces to favor criteria that bear more upon the arms race or crisis management than they do upon war-waging effectiveness. In fact, by way of contrast, in the most important realm of stability analysis of a technical kind, that is to say with reference to "command stability,"²⁰ the Soviet Union has practiced stability while the United States largely has confined itself to talking about it.²¹

- Soviet military strategy is the product of the Soviet military establishment. A decision to fight, and the definition of the political objectives, will of course be within the province of civilians. But once a decision to fight is taken, the Soviet military is unlikely to wage war in the tentative "bargaining" manner outlined by some American theorists as being appropriate to the nuclear age.²²

By way of some contrast, important characteristics of American strategic culture include the following:

- A disinclination to prepare very seriously for the actual conduct of war. For 38 years Americans have told themselves that their policy will have failed if ever a nuclear weapon is used. This is a limited truth which has served to discourage professional preparation for bilateral conflict. US policy

thinking, by and large, terminates abruptly with a putative breakdown in prewar deterrence.²³

- An enduring conviction that somehow, and despite the evidence to the contrary, arms control agreements can help alleviate US security problems. Arms control activity is held to be activity for peace, and the United States, naturally, must abide by the "spirit" as well as by the ambiguous letter of agreements.²⁴

- A faith in high technology and, indeed, generically in panaceas of a managerial and technical kind. Witness the contemporary confidence concerning the promise of smart-weapon technology for deep strikes in Europe.

- A continuing faith in progress, that somehow international politics could evolve toward a condition of greater security. No US president has explained to the American people the enduring geopolitical basis to Soviet-American rivalry. The American people believe, or want to believe, that things can change for the better.

- An arrogance of belief that the American strategic enlightenment was *The Truth*. For years, in and around the SALT forum, Americans lectured Soviet officials on strategic stability, on what fueled arms races, and on what was dangerous in a crisis. In fact, Soviet officials seem not to have had any great difficulty understanding American stability theory, the conviction that societies should remain vulnerable to nuclear retaliation; they understood and rejected it.

Soviet intentions are written in Russian and Soviet history, are inherent in the geostrategic logic of the Soviet security condition, as interpreted by Soviet officials, and cannot easily be deduced from Soviet military preparations. In common with the United States, the Soviet Union wishes to prevent war, but Soviet leaders also seek to intimidate through the shadow cast by their military power, and they believe that the better able the Soviet Union is to fare well in war, the less likely it is that war will occur.²⁵

Just as the prospect of being hung in the morning is supposed, wonderfully, to concentrate the mind—so the shift in the strategic

balance in the 1970s served wonderfully to persuade US governments that they needed a strategic-forces establishment that made military sense (it may be noticed that Great Britain enjoyed a similar awakening enforced by events in the very late 1930s). A liberal democracy, contemplating armed conflict as a distant prospect, will be wont to indulge its hopes rather than its distant fears. There is some danger that should war occur, the United States and NATO-Europe, in accordance with their "peacetime" strategic culture, will be striving to limit the war, control escalation, identify "firebreaks," and the like. Meanwhile the Soviet Union, with its military machine firmly in military hands "for the duration," will be waging the war to win, governed in its operational decisions only by considerations of military efficiency.²⁶

NOTES

This article is an edited version of a lecture delivered at the National War College on 4 January 1984. A small fraction of this article appeared in "National Style in Strategy: The American Example," *International Security*, 6 (Fall 1981).

1. Ken Booth, *Strategy and Ethnocentrism* (London: Croom, Helm, 1979), p. 9.

2. This thesis pervades Booth's analysis (*ibid.*, particularly ch. 1).

3. Prominent among the rare officially commissioned studies in this field are Ruth Benedict, *The Chrysanthemum and the Sword: Patterns of Japanese Culture* (New York: Meridian, 1974, first pub. 1946); and Nathan Leites, *The Operational Code of the Politburo* (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1951). Leites' study, admittedly, draws far more heavily upon Soviet ideology than it does upon evidence of cultural traits.

4. Jack Snyder, *The Soviet Strategic Culture: Implications for Limited Nuclear Operations*, R-2154-AF (Santa Monica, Calif.: RAND, September 1977).

5. Alfred Thayer Mahan, *The Influence of Sea Power Upon History, 1660-1783* (London: Methuen, 1975, first pub. 1890). Mahan "discovered" what the Royal Navy had been practicing as best it was able for two and a half centuries.

6. See Stephen White, *Political Culture and Soviet Politics* (London: Macmillan, 1979), ch. 1; Dennis Kavanaugh, *Political Culture* (London: Macmillan, 1972); A. H. Brown, *Soviet Politics and Political Science* (London: Macmillan, 1974), ch. 4; and Robert Dallek, *The American Style of Foreign Policy: Cultural Politics and Foreign Affairs* (New York: Knopf, 1983).

7. As David Holloway observes, in the context of changes in Soviet military doctrine, "one should not take an 'essentialist' view of Soviet policy, seeing it as springing from some innate characteristic of Russian culture or the Soviet system, impervious to phenomena in the real world." ("Military Power and Political Purpose in Soviet Policy," *Daedalus*, 109 [Fall 1980], 28.) For a full statement of

Holloway's views, see his important study, *The Soviet Union and the Arms Race* (New Haven, Conn.: Yale Univ. Press, 1983).

8. A counterattack against cultural analysis, or—to be fair—against the inappropriate application of cultural analysis, has been launched by Scott Sagan of Harvard in his critical review of Dallek, *The American Style of Foreign Policy*. See *Survival*, 25 (July/August 1983), 191-92.

9. Snyder, *The Soviet Strategic Culture*, p. v.

10. The "war-fighting" theory of deterrence which long has held unambiguous sway as the authoritative Soviet approach to defense preparation is not totally bereft of American adherents. In fact, American nuclear strategy, from NSDM-242 of 1974, through PD-59 of 1980, NSDD-13 of 1981, NSDD-32 of 1982, and the "Scowcroft Commission" Report of 1983, reflects a very clear evolution of thought in the direction of a "war-fighting" theory of deterrence. See Jeffrey Richelson, "PD-59, NSDD-13 and The Reagan Strategic Modernization Program," *The Journal of Strategic Studies*, 6 (June 1983), 125-46; The President's Commission on Strategic Forces, *Report* (Washington: April 1983), particularly p. 7 ("Deterrence . . . requires military effectiveness"); and Colin S. Gray, "War-fighting for Deterrence," *The Journal of Strategic Studies*, 7 (March 1984).

11. Some commentators have harbored the illusion that as a consequence of much better understanding, the United States could orchestrate an interdiction campaign vis à vis Soviet policymaking to influence their internal debate. This idea is attractive, but almost certainly is infeasible. Appropriate comment has been made by David Holloway: "These elements [Soviet conceptions of security and attitudes to military power, strongly influenced by Russian and Soviet history and state structure] do make it difficult for Western governments to exert remote and precise pressure on Soviet military decisions: the policy-making process is largely closed to outside influence." ("Military Power and Political Purpose in Soviet Policy," p. 28.)

12. Ken Booth, "American Strategy: The Myths Revisited," in Booth and Moorhead Weight, eds., *American Thinking About Peace and War* (Hassocks, Sussex, England: Harvester, 1978), pp. 1-35.

13. Capability has a way of defining rivalry, if not enmity. At the close of the First World War, the US government identified British and Japanese naval power as the principal threats to American security, while in the same period, no less naturally, Great Britain was worried about the building program for the US fleet and about the airpower imbalance that it predicted vis à vis France. As the dominant power on the continent of Europe in 1919, France inevitably excited British anxiety. Similarly, in 1944-45 the Soviet Union, courtesy of victory in war, assumed the erstwhile German role as principal threat to the balance of power in Europe.

14. For example, see Thomas Powers, "What Is It About?" *The Atlantic*, 253 (January 1984), 35-55. "It" is the Soviet-American global competition.

15. On the subject of American national interests, see Donald E. Neuchterlein, "National Strategy: The Need for Priority," in Terry L. Heyns, ed., *Understanding U.S. Strategy: A Reader* (Washington: National Defense Univ. Press, 1983), pp. 35-63; and Colin S. Gray, *Long-Range Planning and American Security Interests* (Fairfax, Va.: National Institute for Public Policy, January 1984).

16. Classic explanations of this reasoning are Sir Eyre Crowe, "England's Foreign Policy," in Robert L. Pfaltzgraff, Jr., *Politics and the International System* (Philadelphia: Lippincott, 1969), pp. 384-86; and Nicholas J. Spykman, *The Geography of the Peace* (New York: Harcourt, Brace, 1944).

17. On the character and dynamics of Soviet territorial

and hegemonic imperialism, see Edward N. Luttwak, *The Grand Strategy of the Soviet Union* (London: Weidenfeld and Nicholson, 1983).

18. *How to Think About Soviet Military Doctrine*, P-5935 (Santa Monica, Calif.: RAND, February 1978), p. 7. Also see Rebecca V. Strobe, "Soviet Strategic Style," *Comparative Strategy*, 3 (No. 4, 1982), 319-39.

19. See John Erickson, "The Soviet View of Deterrence: A General Survey," *Survival*, 24 (November/December 1982), 242-51.

20. See John D. Steinbruner, "National Security and the Concept of Strategic Stability," *The Journal of Conflict Resolution*, 22 (September 1978), 411-28.

21. See John D. Steinbruner, "Nuclear Decapitation," *Foreign Policy*, No. 45 (Winter 1981-82), pp. 16-28; Desmond Ball, *Can Nuclear War Be Controlled?* Adelphi Paper No. 169 (London: IISS, Autumn 1981); and Paul Bracken, *The Command and Control of Nuclear Forces* (New Haven, Conn.: Yale Univ. Press, 1983). All three of these authors are pessimistic over the ability of both superpowers to control their nuclear forces in war. I find their pessimism understandable, but excessive.

22. Preeminently in the brilliant writings of Thomas C. Schelling. See his book *Arms and Influence* (New Haven, Conn.: Yale Univ. Press, 1966). A very pertinent analysis of the American theory of limited war, and related ideas, is Stephen Peter Rosen, "Vietnam and the American Theory of Limited War," *International Security*, 7 (Fall 1982), 83-113.

23. As numerous people have observed, American strategic thinking leaves the field precisely when it would most be needed. This is not to say, of course, that the uniformed services have neglected their war-planning duties. In that regard see David Alan Rosenberg, "The Origins of Overkill: Nuclear Weapons and American Strategy, 1945-1960," *International Security*, 7 (Spring 1983), 3-71; Desmond Ball, *Targeting for Strategic Deterrence*, Adelphi Paper No. 185 (London: IISS, Summer 1983); and Colin S. Gray, *Nuclear Strategy and Strategic Planning*, Philadelphia Policy Papers (Philadelphia: Foreign Policy Research Institute, 1984). As often as not what purports to be applied strategy is really little more than capabilities planning.

24. For an analysis of a "back to basics" character, see Colin S. Gray, "Arms Control: Problems," in James Woolsey, ed., *Nuclear Arms: Ethics, Strategy, Politics* (San Francisco: Institute for Contemporary Studies, 1984).

25. An important recent article discussing possible changes in the official Soviet attitude toward war and the utility of nuclear force is Dan L. Strobe and Rebecca V. Strobe, "Diplomacy and Defense in Soviet National Security Policy," *International Security*, 8 (Fall 1983), 91-116. Notwithstanding the strength of competing convictions with which Western commentators debate the issue of whether or not the Soviet Union believes it could win a nuclear war, few people would dissent from the following characterization of the Soviet perspective offered by David Holloway: "The Soviet leaders have been forced to recognize that their relationship with the United States is in reality one of mutual vulnerability to devastating nuclear strikes, and that there is no immediate prospect of escaping from this relationship. Within the constraints of this mutual vulnerability they have tried to prepare for nuclear war, and they would try to win such a war if it came to that. But there is little evidence to suggest that they think victory in a global nuclear war would be anything other than catastrophic." (*The Soviet Union and the Arms Race*, p. 179).

26. See John J. Dziak, *Soviet Perceptions of Military Power: The Interaction of Theory and Practice* (New York: Crane, Russak [for the National Strategy Information Center], 1981).

AFGHANISTAN STALEMATE:

"SELF-DETERMINATION" AND A SOVIET FORCE WITHDRAWAL

by

SELIG S. HARRISON

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Politically as well as militarily, the ugly stalemate in Afghanistan deepens. On one side, the Soviet-subsidized communist regime is slowly but steadily building a stable Afghan city-state in Kabul and its environs, buttressed not only by Soviet forces but also by an elaborate Afghan military, paramilitary, and secret police apparatus. On the other, scattered groups of dedicated resistance fighters, while better coordinated militarily than in the past, continue to lack the political infrastructure that would be necessary to follow up their military successes by establishing secure liberated areas in the countryside.

The prevailing Western image of the Afghan struggle is grossly distorted because it denies the reality of a political stalemate. In this simplistic imagery, there is a sharp dichotomy between an illegitimate Kabul regime, unable to establish its writ beyond the capital, and an alternative focus of legitimacy collectively provided by the resistance fighters, who are seen as controlling most of the country's land area. It is true that the Kabul regime does not have a firm grip on much of the countryside, but neither does the resistance. In reality, most of Afghanistan, now as in past decades and centuries, is governed by free-wheeling local tribal and ethnic warlords.

Until its destruction in 1973, the monarchy had provided the sole focus of

political legitimacy and authority in Afghanistan for more than three centuries. The Afghan state was just barely a state. It was loosely superimposed atop a decentralized polity in which separate ethnic and tribal communities paid obeisance to Kabul only so long as it accorded them substantial autonomy. The number of politicized Afghans who wanted to create a centralized state was miniscule in relation to the total population. This politicized elite consisted of three distinct groups: Western-oriented intellectuals, who made up the largest segment; Soviet-oriented communist factions; and Islamic fundamentalist elements with Moslem Brotherhood links in the Persian Gulf and the Middle East. None of these groups had substantial independent organizational networks in the countryside. They were all equally dependent on alliances with the local tribal and ethnic leaders who held the real power then and who continue to hold the real power in Afghanistan today.

Most of these local warlords would like to get Soviet forces out of their areas and out of Afghanistan, but this does not mean that they are firmly committed to the resistance. Some of them are opportunists who try to get what they can out of both sides. Others give intermittent help to one or another of the resistance groups but are constrained by fear of Soviet reprisals. Still others, smaller in number, are trying to come to terms with the

Babrak Karmal regime but are afraid that helping Kabul would bring punishment from the resistance. For most villagers, trapped between increasingly efficient Soviet-cum-Afghan forces and increasingly well-equipped resistance fighters, the issue is simply how to survive.

The concept of legitimacy has little meaning against the backdrop of recent Afghan political history. The destruction of the monarchy left a political vacuum in which no consensus existed concerning the future of the Afghan polity, and no one group could make a clear-cut claim of greater legitimacy than another. If former King Zahir Shah's democratic experiment in the 1960s provided a test of political acceptance at that time, Karmal could claim at least a marginal place in the Afghan political constellation, since he was elected to parliament from Kabul twice during this period. Neither the communists nor the Islamic fundamentalists claimed more than a few thousand members each in 1973. But even a few thousand disciplined, highly motivated members loomed large in what was such a limited political universe.

In addition to posing ideological challenges to the Western-oriented elite, the communist and fundamentalist movements were vehicles of social protest by disadvantaged elements of the Afghan populace. Karmal's Parcham (Flag) communist faction represented many of those in the detribalized Kabul intelligentsia and bureaucracy who felt shut out of power by the narrow dynastic in-group that dominated both the monarchy and the republic set up by Zahir Shah's jealous cousin, the late Mohammed Daud. The rival Khalq (Masses) faction had more of a tribal base, drawing largely on out-groups within the Pushtuns, Afghanistan's largest ethnic bloc. As American anthropologist Jon Anderson has observed, the Khalqi leaders consisted largely of politicized "second sons and younger brothers" from the weaker Pushtun tribes, searching for channels of social ascent in the face of the monopoly on military, bureaucratic, and professional jobs enjoyed by the Pushtun in-group centered in the royal family.¹ By contrast, the strongest fundamentalist cadres were organized in

ethnic minority areas, such as the predominantly Tajik Pansjer Valley. The current resistance hero, Ahmad Shah Massoud, and his mentor, Jamaat Islami leader Burhanuddin Rabbani, built their organizational base in the Pansjer long before the Soviet occupation, preaching not only the Jamaat brand of fundamentalism but also the cause of Tajik liberation from Pushtun exploitation.

The intractability of the political stalemate in Afghanistan today can only be understood if one recognizes that the present conflict began as a civil war. To be sure, many Afghans who welcomed the communist takeover in 1978 were alienated by the brutality and overzealous reforms of the late Hafizullah Amin, and many Afghans today feel that Karmal has lost all patriotic credentials as a result of his collaboration with the Russians. In the eyes of Afghan communists, however, Karmal has aligned himself with the Russians temporarily and unavoidably in order to get the foreign help needed to consolidate a revolution and to modernize Afghanistan.

On a recent visit to Kabul, I was reminded forcibly that dedication and a patriotic self-image are not a monopoly of the resistance fighters. The Afghan communists see themselves as carrying forward the abortive modernization effort launched

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by King Amanullah in the 1920s. The communist organization is clearly much stronger now than it was in 1978 even if one assumes that many of the new party recruits are mere job-seekers. In particular, I found widespread evidence that Karmal is making progress in moderating Khalq-Parcham factional tensions and in building a new communist leadership network drawn from the 10,000 or more young Afghans being trained in the Soviet Union. The communist regime is no longer incapacitated by factionalism as it was during the initial years of the Soviet occupation.

Despite popular distaste for the Soviet presence, there is a grudging tolerance of Karmal as a "moderate" communist who is trying to live down Amin's extremist mistakes. The communist regime now avoids direct assaults on the property and prerogatives of Islamic dignitaries, merchants, and small and moderate landowners, permitting peasants to own up to 15 acres. In contrast to Amin, who sought to centralize the country overnight, Karmal promises to respect the traditional tribal power structure. He told me that the Communist Party would not interfere with tribal autonomy and that local tribal *jirgas*, or assemblies, would be given direct representation in local and national governmental bodies. So far, however, this is only talk, and there is little evidence that his soft line toward the tribes has had much impact.

Kabul is not Beirut. Security precautions were casual or nonexistent during my eight days there in March. I was able to walk freely in all parts of the city, now swollen to more than two million people by refugees displaced from the countryside, which is roughly 15 percent of the population still left in the country. Policemen patrol major intersections, making spot checks of identification cards, but there are no checkpoints. Soviet forces and Afghan army units generally stay out of sight in their suburban encampments. The fact that a nightly curfew is still necessary after four years of the Soviet occupation testifies to the existence of a potent underground resistance in the capital, and resistance rocket attacks from nearby

mountain redoubts have become more frequent since my visit. But the Western image of a city ever ready to burst into open rebellion, and of a regime perpetually on the verge of collapse, seems highly overdrawn.

The number of Afghans on the Soviet-subsidized payroll of the Kabul regime is some 375,000, including about 60,000 in the army, another 75,000 in various paramilitary forces, and at least 25,000 in the secret police. The army is still plagued by desertions, but the desertion rate appears to have leveled off. As for the resistance, the number of organized *mujahidin* with regular links to base camps in Pakistan and to external inputs of weaponry and financial aid appears to be about 35,000. In my interviews with *mujahidin* in Pakistan over the past five years, I have been struck by the fervor of their religious and patriotic commitment to their cause. My impression in Kabul was that the time-serving conscripts in the Afghan army lack this commitment, but that their communist officers and junior officers are highly motivated. Conversations in Kabul with the military attachés of several third world embassies who have close contact with the Afghan army suggest that factional divisions in the officer corps are less severe than in the past and that it is becoming a useful adjunct to the Soviet military machine.

Far from offering an alternative focus of legitimacy to the Kabul regime, the resistance groups are themselves divided on ethnic, tribal, and sectarian lines. Repeatedly during the past five years, they have failed to establish a collective identity despite intense pressure from Washington and Arab capitals. Moreover, since they are organized primarily to conduct military operations, most of them do not have disciplined political cadres capable of building an underground political and administrative infrastructure at the local level. The Pansjer Valley, Kandahar and Herat cities, and parts of Ghazni district are conspicuous exceptions to this generalization. In these areas one or more resistance groups have relatively solid political foundations that could conceivably become the basis for liberated zones similar to those established in China, Vietnam, Guinea-Bissau, and other

third world countries where guerrilla armies have been successful. Kabul is likely to face significant resistance in the Pansjer indefinitely despite the relentless onslaught of the Soviet military juggernaut in offensive after offensive. But the fact that the Pansjer is an ethnic minority Tajik area, and a stronghold of the fundamentalist groups, limits its potential as a rallying point for the resistance in the Pushtun areas and other parts of the country where the fundamentalist appeal is weak.

Islamic fundamentalism is not as strong in Afghanistan as it is often assumed. It is arrayed against the entire traditional Islamic leadership as well as against Western-oriented and communist modernizers alike. More important, with their pan-Islamic ideology, the fundamentalist groups have alienated the powerful tribal hierarchy in the Pushtun areas by calling for the abolition of tribalism as incompatible with their conception of a centralized Islamic state.

Except in the Pansjer Valley and several urban areas, the fundamentalist groups have never had significant locally-based organizations, but the advent of a communist Afghanistan in 1978 gave their exiled leaders a golden opportunity to build cadres among the Afghan refugees in Pakistan. Since 1978 they have received support from fundamentalist elements in the Middle East and the Gulf. Most of the American and Chinese aid to the resistance channeled through Pakistani authorities has also gone to the fundamentalists rather than to tribally-based Pushtun elements of the resistance. One reason for this is that the Zia Ul-Haq regime in Islamabad is dependent on political support from the Pakistani fundamentalist groups. Another is the legacy of Pushtun irredentism. The Pushtuns in Afghanistan have periodically demanded the return of Pushtun areas annexed by the British Raj a century ago and later bequeathed to Pakistan when it was created in 1947. Pakistani leaders fear that Pushtun refugees from Afghanistan might now combine with Pakistani Pushtuns to demand the creation of a separate "Pushtunistan" in the Pakistani-Afghan borderlands. Islamabad has consciously

sought to prevent Pushtun groups from using the present conflict to coalesce politically and to strengthen themselves militarily.

Oblivious as it is to the political aspects of the conflict, the United States has accepted the Pakistani rationale that military effectiveness should be the only criterion for aid allocations. This has given Islamabad carte blanche to channel aid to the relatively cohesive fundamentalist paramilitary cadres, based in Pakistan, rather than to the loosely organized but locally prestigious Pushtun tribal guerrillas operating in the Afghan countryside.

In my view, covert aid to the Afghan resistance is desirable as part of a two-track policy in which the United States and others simultaneously pursue a negotiated settlement designed to achieve a Soviet force withdrawal, accompanied by limitations on the expansion and upgrading of the bases that Soviet forces have been developing in Afghanistan. Support for the resistance is essential to bolster the bargaining position of noncommunist Afghans in efforts to reach accommodation with the Afghan communists and the Russians. But a politically myopic aid program that serves primarily to build up Islamic fundamentalist cadres in the Afghan refugee camps in Pakistan is not consistent with such a two-track policy. Aid to the fundamentalists helps to sustain resistance activity militarily and thus to raise the costs of the Soviet occupation. But it is questionable whether it promotes a political solution that could lead to a Soviet withdrawal. The fundamentalist factions espouse foreign and domestic policies that make them anathema to the Soviet Union. Most of these factions seek not only the withdrawal of Soviet forces but the eradication of Soviet and communist influence. By contrast, many of the tribally-based Pushtun resistance elements, focusing on a Soviet withdrawal, are prepared to consider some form of coexistence with a more broadly-based Kabul regime in which tribal autonomy is honored and noncommunist elements have a significant share of power. Former King Zahir Shah has not ruled out such a com-

promise. His refusal so far to lend himself to the idea of a government in exile appears to reflect a belief that a Soviet withdrawal can only be achieved through a face-saving accommodation in which the Democratic Republic of Afghanistan would at least nominally continue to exist.

The Reagan Administration calls for an Afghan settlement in accordance with United Nations resolutions, based on "a Soviet withdrawal, a return to the independent and non-aligned status of Afghanistan, self-determination for the Afghan people and the return of the refugees with dignity and honor." However, the United States has had an ambivalent attitude toward the UN scenario for a settlement developed by Undersecretary General Diego Cordovez in his continuing mediation efforts.² This ambivalence is explained in part by objections to important procedural aspects of the projected settlement. But it also reflects more basic objections to the Cordovez premise that a Soviet withdrawal, per se, would fulfill the self-determination criterion of the UN resolutions.

Under the UN scenario, the DRA would be left in place and would have a chance to survive following a Soviet withdrawal, if it could, either through a political accommodation with its opponents, or internecine military struggle, or both. The DRA argues that it could, in fact, survive without a Soviet force presence if US and other aid to the resistance were stopped in accordance with the terms of the draft settlement. Administration officials ridicule this claim, but the American position is, in any case, that the replacement of the Karmal regime by a more representative regime should be agreed upon as a precondition for concluding the UN settlement.

The prospects for a settlement acceptable to significant noncommunist Afghan elements are dim, especially in the present context of Soviet-American relations. Nevertheless, the United States and other noncommunist countries should make a more serious effort to test the possibility of a Soviet withdrawal through a reorientation of aid allocations and a more positive and more

flexible approach to the UN negotiations. The American approach to the UN negotiations has so far been governed by the uncritical assumption that the DRA could not survive in the absence of Soviet forces. As I have suggested elsewhere, this may well be the case, and the Russians may merely be playing a game of diplomatic brinkmanship.³ But it should be remembered that the UN scenario would permit the DRA to continue receiving Soviet economic and military aid while precluding further outside aid to the resistance. It is an inherently asymmetrical scenario. The United States and other noncommunist countries should not prejudice whether the Russians could, or would, withdraw under this scenario but should focus instead on the quid pro quos that would make such a scenario desirable.

The governing criterion for an acceptable settlement should be whether it assures that Moscow would not add strategic bases in Afghanistan to its other military capabilities adjacent to the Gulf and Southwest Asia. At present the Soviet air bases at Bagram, Kabul, Kandahar, and Shindand have runways long enough to receive a limited number of Bison bombers and other long-range strategic aircraft, but these facilities were built before the occupation with earlier Soviet and American economic and military aid. Most Western intelligence sources agree that Moscow has not yet taken a variety of steps (e.g. substantially lengthened the runways, substantially expanded petroleum storage facilities, and built new hardstands for parking reserve squadrons) that would be necessary to equip its Afghan air bases to support large numbers of strategic aircraft on long stopovers. Instead, Soviet efforts to improve these bases have been primarily tailored to make them more effective as counterinsurgency bases for helicopters and tactical fighter aircraft used against the *mujahidin*.

If the present escalation of the Afghan conflict should continue, together with a growing polarization of Afghan political forces, Moscow would be likely to intensify

its efforts to make Afghanistan a South Asian Mongolia governed by a monolithic communist elite. This would necessitate an indefinite military occupation, which would no doubt be accompanied, in time, by the development of strategic bases. The security interests of noncommunist countries would be better served by a negotiated settlement based on acceptance of a Finland-style security relationship between the Soviet Union and a less monolithic client regime in Kabul.⁴

Strictly speaking, the experience of Finland is not comparable to the tragedy in Afghanistan, since the Finns had a degree of political and military unity that the Afghans lack. But the parallel does suggest the type of security relationship with Afghanistan that the Russians would be likely to expect as part of a settlement. Moscow withdrew its forces from Finland only after Helsinki agreed to a treaty proviso that in effect permitted the return of Soviet troops "in the event of Finland, or the Soviet Union through the territory of Finland, becoming the object of military aggression." To be sure, Article One of the 1948 Finnish-Soviet treaty did not give Moscow the unqualified *de jure* right to reoccupy Finland, but it provided for Soviet assistance to Finland "in case of necessity . . . on the granting of which the parties will reach agreement with one another." Similarly, Article Four of the 1978 treaty concluded between the Soviet Union and the Kabul communist regime provides that "the High Contracting Parties shall consult with each other and shall, by agreement, take the necessary steps to safeguard the security, independence and territorial integrity of the two countries."

An agreement on continuation of the 1978 treaty is likely to be a *sine qua non* for Soviet acceptance of a political settlement in Afghanistan. While the UN draft agreement does not address this issue directly, it would leave in place a regime committed to continuation of the treaty. The UN agreement would provide for the complete withdrawal of Soviet combat forces, but it pointedly omits any reference to Soviet advisers: So

long as Moscow continued to have a client regime in Afghanistan, Soviet military advisers could remain there, maintaining airfields, military communications, and other military facilities in a state of readiness. Moscow would thus be in a position to reintroduce its forces on short notice. Nevertheless, in the event of a future military crisis involving the movement of Soviet forces through Afghanistan, the United States and its allies would have much more warning time than at present. A Soviet combat force withdrawal would clearly serve Western security interests in the Gulf and Southwest Asia by relieving the immediate military pressure resulting from ongoing Soviet force deployments and from the ongoing operational use of Soviet bases.

With respect to Soviet advisers, it should be kept in mind that Moscow had some 6000 military advisers in Afghanistan during the noncommunist Mohammed Daud regime. The fact that the UN scenario would not preclude the presence of advisers should not in itself be a barrier to US support of the projected agreement. But the United States and its allies could properly make their support conditional on Soviet readiness to conclude credible ancillary agreements prohibiting the development of strategic bases in Afghanistan as well as any expansion or upgrading of tactical air bases that could pose an offensive threat to neighboring states.

NOTES

1. Jon Anderson, "Afghan Analogies, Afghan Realities" (unpublished manuscript).

2. For an elaboration of the terms of the projected UN agreement, see my article "A Breakthrough in Afghanistan?" *Foreign Policy*, No. 51 (Summer 1983), pp. 3-26; and my essay "The Soviet Union in Afghanistan: Retrospect and Prospect," in *International Security in Southwest Asia*, ed. by Hafeez Malik (Praeger, 1984).

3. See "A Breakthrough in Afghanistan?" See also my testimony before the Asian and Pacific Affairs Subcommittee of the Committee on Foreign Affairs, US House of Representatives, 28 July 1983, and my article "Are We Fighting to the Last Afghan?" *The Washington Post*, 29 December 1983, p. A17.

4. The modalities of such a relationship are discussed in my paper "The United States and South Asia," presented at a conference on "Defense Planning for the 1990's" sponsored by the National Security Affairs Institute of the National Defense University, Washington, 7-8 October 1983.

NUCLEAR POWER IN BRAZIL

by

MAX G. MANWARING

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To the present time, only the United States, the Soviet Union, the United Kingdom, France, China, India, and possibly Israel have acquired nuclear weapons. But it is only a matter of time before additional countries join this nuclear club. The prospect of a proliferation chain including Argentina and Brazil has been recognized for some time. Much has been said about Argentine nuclear potential as a result of success in mastering the nuclear fuel cycle, announcements that the country is now capable of making its own nuclear weapons, and statements elaborating that this technology would become a fundamental tool in its foreign policy.¹ The nuclear situation in Brazil, however, remains somewhat obscure.

What the further spread of nuclear weapons development capability might do to the international system is a compelling question, but not within the scope of this article.² My purpose is more limited: first, to analyze briefly the roots and functioning of Brazilian nuclear development policy in light of the military-political elite's geopolitical thought; and then to examine the basics of the program that Brazil is, in fact, implementing. Through the fusing of attitude and behavior, one can gain a clear picture of the present status of the nuclear industry in Brazil and its possible significance in the hemisphere and the world.

GEOPOLITICS AND NUCLEAR POLICY

The wellsprings of current policy are to be found in the concepts of Brazilian

geopolitical thinking. The major contemporary figure has been General Golbery da Couta e Silva.³ Much of present governmental policy—and much of what is being done—is a result of research done over the years at the Superior War College and synthesized by Golbery. As a result, the military-backed regimes that have been in power since 1964 have been provided with a conceptual framework for the dynamic economic, political, social, and military development of the country. Moreover, Golbery has held positions of great influence in all the administrations since 1964 and thus has been present to interpret and continue to develop contemporary geopolitical thinking as it applies to Brazil.

Golbery argues that Brazil must develop itself or perish.⁴ Development, in the most simple terms, consists of two elements, security and economic growth. More specifically, security involves the defense of economic and political sovereignty in a world that is becoming more and more aggressive. Economic growth means continued and expanded participation in building the nation's agricultural and industrial base. Brazilian nuclear policy is a manifestation by which the nation expresses its will to live, to develop, and to preserve itself within the framework of the international community. In order to attain these objectives, a "creative minority," generally from within the armed forces, will seek to carry out the necessary implementation programs and has the overall responsibility to make Brazil into a real nation.⁵

The nation's nuclear development policy, therefore, is derived from its broad economic and political goals, and is not just a means of producing energy. In this sense, nuclear policy is to establish a nuclear power industry that can serve as a means by which Brazil might transform itself from an obscure third world "dependency" into an autonomous power center in its own right.⁶

The first indication that this would be the case came in 1967 when then-President Costa e Silva stated that one of the major objectives of his administration would be the attainment of necessary foreign cooperation for the rapid nuclearization of Brazil.⁷ Solid evidence to this effect came in 1968 when Brazil signed and ratified the Treaty of Tlatelolco (though through a procedural ruse, it remains legally unbound).⁸ Further evidence was provided when the 1973 oil crisis and subsequent quadrupling of energy prices brought the Brazilian "economic miracle" to an untimely halt. Under those circumstances the government responded with a massive \$65 billion, 12-year commitment to the development of internal energy resources, including nuclear energy.⁹

Then, in 1974, NUCLEBRAS was founded as a state company with a charter to provide direction for the nation's nuclear policy.¹⁰ At the same time, the decision was made to establish an independent all-Brazilian nuclear program based on an enriched uranium technology, to which the country was already committed. The United States let it be known that no new contracts would be let for the supply of enriched uranium and that existing nuclear agreements with Brazil were subject to review.¹¹ This motivated the Geisel administration to seek its nuclear technology elsewhere. As a result, a multibillion-dollar agreement was signed with the Federal Republic of Germany in June 1975. Fulfillment of the terms of this agreement would provide Brazil with a full nuclear cycle and eight reactors, in addition to one that was already under construction, Angra I. Subsequent supplemental agreements have been made with the Netherlands, France, Britain, and the United States.¹²

Since 1975 and the beginning of the transfer of technology under the terms of the agreement with Germany, several things have taken place which confuse the issue of Brazilian nuclear development. First, there were—and still are—several problems in the construction of the reactors. Thus, the program of power plant construction is now considerably behind schedule. Second, the Germans have been accused of deliberately slowing the Brazilian nuclear program.¹³ Especially critical comments suggest that foreign interests are subjecting the country to "blackmail."¹⁴ Third, the burdens imposed by the large Brazilian external debt have forced the government to make statements to the effect that after dealing with the problem, the country "has nothing left over for development."¹⁵ It appeared by mid-1982, then, that the Brazilian nuclear program was substantially diminished, if not completely halted.

Nevertheless, President Figueiredo has pursued a policy that is very much in accord with that of his predecessors. The following measures are among the steps that have been taken to maintain the momentum of—or bring back on track—Brazilian nuclear development.

First, in June 1982 the Mines and Energy Minister, Caesar Cals, hinted that the priority for construction of reactors was being downgraded for economic reasons. He explained that new nuclear power plants would be begun only when the problem of uranium

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enrichment had been fully resolved.¹⁶ Significantly, it was also suggested that the government would like to wait until Brazilian scientists develop the ability to build fast-breeder reactors that would use thorium instead of uranium. The argument is that fast-breeder reactors produce ten times the plutonium that would be produced from reactors built with German technology.¹⁷ Moreover, it has been estimated that it would take 7800 years to use up all known Brazilian thorium even if that element were used to provide all Brazilian demands for electricity.¹⁸ In both cases, the implications are clear: even by delaying the program somewhat, Brazil will obtain more plutonium over a shorter period of time by using an element found in great abundance in that country.

Second, while the German fuel cycle is being transferred, Brazil appears to be developing a parallel program that would be exclusively Brazilian. Evidence of such a program may be seen in the construction of an all-Brazilian uranium processing plant at Itataia, and in current research that would lead to uranium enrichment using laser rays, fast-breeder reactors using thorium, and the planning of all-Brazilian fuel fabrication and reprocessing plants.¹⁹ Furthermore, in early 1983, all research in the field of nuclear energy was centralized under the control of the federal government. Private and state institutions are still allowed to carry out nuclear research, but only through a coordinating agreement with NUCLEBRAS.²⁰ At the same time, Brazil continues to pay for and take delivery of German equipment for its nuclear power plants.²¹

Third, despite publicly announced budget cuts of up to 47 percent from the 1983 nuclear program,²² large portions of the cuts do not, in reality, appear to have been made.²³ For example, \$100 million supplements were provided to the NUCLEBRAS budget in 1982 and were expected for 1983 and beyond.²⁴ This has been accomplished by, among other things, taking from the budget for scientific and technical development,²⁵ reducing highway and railroad construction and the development of

communications,²⁶ obtaining international loans,²⁷ and deficit spending on the part of NUCLEBRAS.²⁸ For 1984, the President of NUCLEBRAS, Dario Gomes, reportedly expected a budget of \$750 million.²⁹

Finally, in December 1983 the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) was officially notified that the Brazilian government would, again, not sign the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty. In that communication, the Foreign Minister, Ramiro Saraiva Guerreiro, noted that not all the countries "that are filled to the brim with megatons, such as France, India, and the People's Republic of China, are signatories to the treaty." He added that "the countries that underscore the importance of the treaty are precisely those which proliferate nuclear arms, such as the USSR, the United States, and Great Britain."³⁰ Thus, Brazil continues to be legally uncircumscribed by any international nuclear control measures.

Through various means and the guiding geopolitical premises for development, the goals of Brazilian nuclear policy have endured from the late 1960s, and the Costa e Silva administration, to the present. Barring some great catastrophe, this policy is unlikely to change in the foreseeable future. Clearly, the policy is to continue to develop nuclear power. And the implementation of that policy is of relatively high priority.

An examination of the programs that carry out nuclear development policy will further clarify the situation and make the political, economic, and military implications more explicit.

THE BASICS OF THE PROGRAM

Given Brazilian strategic thinking, a large and independent nuclear power production capability is a necessity for the country. Such a capability would resolve energy problems, provide for the creation of a large and lucrative new industry, and establish the potential to enhance national security. In this context, the nuclear development program is the crowning point in the realization of Brazil's long-touted greatness. Consequently, there are three

complementary parts of the program: nuclear power production, a nuclear weapon production capability, and the development of the additional capability of delivering nuclear weapons.

Nuclear Power Production. This part of the program has been in progress since the 1930s,³¹ but did not get beyond the seminar room and laboratory until 1972 when construction was begun at the nuclear power plant at Angra dos Reis (Angra I). However, the establishment of an independent, full nuclear cycle involves four basic components in addition to the construction of reactors: uranium and/or thorium production, fuel enrichment, fuel fabrication, and reprocessing.

With regard to the power plants, the 1975 agreement with the Federal Republic of Germany included provisions for the construction of eight reactors of 1380 megawatts each, in addition to the 626-megawatt Angra I plant. All of these plants were to have been in operation before 1990. However, as noted above, because of a lack of funds and the political decision giving priority to the mastering of the nuclear fuel cycle, reactor construction is not on schedule. Furthermore, at this point it is not certain that all eight reactors will be built. The status of reactor construction as of early 1984 is as follows. Angra I was scheduled to go into operation in 1977 but is currently operating at only 30 percent of capacity. Angra II is not likely to be completed in 1987 as scheduled. Angra III has had its site moved, but heavy equipment for it has arrived from Germany and construction was scheduled to begin in 1984. Preparations at the worksites for Peruipe IV and V have been delayed. And construction contracts for Iguape I and II will not be let until 1987. According to Mines and Energy Minister Cesar Cals, the plants to be contracted for in 1987 can be operational in 1997.³²

NUCLEBRAS Mineral Resources Director John Albuquerque Forman has stated that current Brazilian uranium reserves of 301,490 tons will feed 48 pressurized water reactors for 30 years.³³ As a result, these reserves can easily guarantee fuel supply to the nuclear plants foreseen in the nuclear

development program. Currently, uranium concentrates are being produced at the NUCLEBRAS mining and industrial complex at Poco de Caldas. This facility was opened in May 1982 and has the capacity to provide 500 metric tons of yellow-cake a day.³⁴ Also, another type of uranium production plant at Itataia—utilizing all-Brazilian technology—was scheduled for completion in mid-1984.³⁵ Reportedly, the French government is providing substantial financing for this project in return for part of the uranium produced.³⁶ In any case, it appears that despite severe financial constraints, Brazil is moving toward an adequate fuel production capability for its reactors.

A uranium enrichment plant at Resende was to be producing on an industrial scale as early as 1986.³⁷ However, construction has stopped due to a lack of funds. It is estimated that in order to deal successfully with this part of the nuclear power production process, Brazil would have to invest \$2.2 billion over the next two years.³⁸ Consequently, a Brazilian research program is under way which is aimed at developing a technique to use laser rays as an alternative to the German-designed centrifugal jet (jet nozzle) process.³⁹ The importance of this research is reflected in the fact that the project is being undertaken at three different institutions—the Institute for Nuclear and Energy Research, the Aerospace Technology Center, and, possibly, at the University of Campinas.⁴⁰ Uranium enrichment is, in fact, the key to the mastery of the nuclear fuel cycle, and until the problem is solved the Brazilian nuclear development program cannot come to fruition.

In the meantime, the basic engineering and pilot plants for fuel fabrication and reprocessing have reportedly been completed, but no dates have been fixed for expansion to commercial scale.⁴¹

It would appear, then, that Brazil has two nuclear power production programs—one very costly effort, based on the transfer of technology from Germany; and one which will be all-Brazilian, more economical, and ultra-modern, but which has not yet gotten a fuel enrichment plant into production.

Argentina has such a facility, although it relies on gaseous diffusion methods that have been in use in France, the USSR, and the United States for about 40 years. The latter point, however, is doubtless of little comfort to Brazilian decision-makers. It would seem likely that the Brazilian government will find the necessary means to provide new impetus for the quick establishment of a complete nuclear fuel cycle.

Nuclear Weapon Production Capability. If Brazil's primary purpose for creating a nuclear power production capability were simply to develop a military nuclear device, a far less complex and much less expensive program would probably have already achieved that goal. Moreover, on several occasions over the past several years, the various governments have reaffirmed the exclusively peaceful nature of the nuclear development program. Additionally, Brazilian representatives periodically confirm adherence to the principles of the Tlatelolco Treaty and have signed a safeguards agreement with the IAEA which exceeds the requirements of the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty. Nevertheless, a nuclear explosive device produced for peaceful purposes can be as lethal and destructive as one designed for the military. A country exploding such a device would become, de facto, a nuclear power.

In the case of Brazil, it was expected that eight reactors would go into production, one a year from 1982 until 1989. This, of course, is no longer possible. But despite its late start and slowed development, Brazil's nuclear program—which includes a limited plutonium production capability even with the German technology—is theoretically capable of producing nuclear weapons. For example, even though Angra I is currently producing at only 30 percent of capacity, it has been estimated that Brazil could produce five 20-kiloton weapons a year.⁴² The production from the reactors currently under construction, Angra II and III, along with Angra I will give Brazil a capability three times greater than that of such a celebrated nuclear power as India.⁴³ Finally, as each of the reactors projected for completion by 1997

comes on line, Brazil will take major steps toward a serious nuclear weapon production capability. They will produce approximately 11,000 megawatts a year—a little less than France was producing in 1980.⁴⁴

The Capability to Deliver Nuclear Weapons. Brazil's theoretical capability to manufacture nuclear weapons is complemented by its ability to deliver such devices. For a number of years, the Brazilian air force has had jet aircraft that can deliver nuclear payloads.⁴⁵ The Brazilian navy will also become involved when A-4 Skyhawks become operational aboard the aircraft carrier *Minas Gerais*.⁴⁶ Perhaps more importantly, a long-standing missile project has been developing a series of rockets for the relatively well-funded Brazilian space program.⁴⁷ Thus, there is now a family of missiles in being. Sonda I has a capacity to carry loads of five kilograms to altitudes of 75 to 120 kilometers. Sonda II is capable of carrying loads of 20 to 50 kilograms to altitudes of 120 to 200 kilometers. Sonda III can take 50 kilograms to an altitude of 500 kilometers; and Sonda IV is capable of carrying 300 kilograms more than 1000 kilometers into space.⁴⁸ Moreover, it has been reported that experts working at the Aerospace Technology Center say that a missile is being planned that will be capable of carrying a payload of 1000 kilograms approximately 3000 kilometers.⁴⁹

With a dual delivery capability, a nuclear power production capability, and the theoretical ability to manufacture a nuclear explosive device, implications are again clear. Brazil would need only a political decision to develop nuclear weapons.

CONCLUSIONS

Mastery of the complete nuclear fuel cycle is one thing, the ability to deliver nuclear weapons is another, and a political decision to produce nuclear weapons is something else again. To this point, Brazilian leaders have been content to continue research and nuclear power development in consonance with the political decision to establish a vast independent nuclear power

industry designed to produce energy for peaceful purposes. Nevertheless, this program is a manifestation of geopolitical thinking which has military and political overtones, as well as economic ramifications.

Nuclear power is the capstone of Brazilian modernization. It is the military which has the responsibility to project the country into the world arena as a major power. All the great powers are also nuclear powers. Consequently, nuclear power is also the means by which Brazil will achieve major power status. The question of why the political decision has not been made to create larger and more formidable military forces and to produce nuclear weapons for them is answered, in part, by the fact that Brazil has not yet readied its capstone. A well-established, working, and totally Brazilian nuclear industry is absolutely necessary before a credible military program can be maintained in world-class competition.

NOTES

1. The official announcement of Argentine success in mastering the fuel cycle came in a press communique read by Argentine Foreign Minister-designate Dante Caputo at the Hotel Panamericano on 5 December 1983. Previous interviews with Vice-Admiral Carlos Castro Madero, chairman of the National Atomic Energy Commission, elaborated this technology as a fundamental tool for Argentine foreign policy in, for example, his interview on the "28 Millones" program, Television Color Network, 31 November 1983.
2. However, if the potential for conflict is real, the opportunities for its control are also real. In this connection, the Treaty of Tlatelolco and the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty could be made more effective and realistic. As these nuclear control measures are improved, they will reduce the risk of conflict as a result of accident or miscalculation; and, bit-by-bit, pave the way toward a more secure and peaceful world. Policymakers representing the "nuclear club" and those countries such as Brazil which have the potential capability of playing a major role in the international security system have a clear responsibility. The problem is to rethink, improve, and revitalize relevant arms control measures before any given dispute reaches crisis proportions.
3. Golbery's most important books are: *Planejamento Estrategico* (Rio: Biblioteca do Exército, 1955); *Aspectos Geopoliticos do Brasil* (Rio: Biblioteca do Exército, 1957); and, *Geopolitica do Brasil* (Rio: Jose Olympica, 1967).
4. Golbery, *Aspectos Geopoliticos do Brasil*, p. 66.
5. President Humberto Castelo Branco, speech to the congress on 31 March 1965 in commemoration of the revolution.
6. Ibid.
7. President Artur da Costa e Silva, pronouncement of foreign policy at the *Palacio Itamaraty* (Ministry of External Relations) in Brasilia, 5 April 1967.
8. The provisions of the treaty are binding only when all Latin American states (and other states party to the treaty) have acceded to both its protocols. This restriction may be waived by the Latin American countries. Brazil has not, however, waived this provision and thus remains legally unbound by the treaty. For further analysis of the potential of the Treaty of Tlatelolco see John Maddox, *Prospects for Nuclear Proliferation*, Adelphi Paper 113 (London: IISS, 1975), pp. 7-8.
9. Normal Gall, "Atoms for Brazil, Dangers for all," *Foreign Policy*, No. 23 (Summer 1976), p. 195.
10. Republica Federativa do Brasil, *O Programa Nuclear Brasileiro*, March 1977. However, although NUCLEBRAS is under the jurisdiction of the Ministry of Mines and Energy, in reality it functions as a separate agency.
11. For more information on the inability or unwillingness of the United States to guarantee long-term enrichment services, see John R. Redick, "Nuclear Proliferation in Latin America," in *Latin America's New Internationalism: The End of Hemispheric Isolation*, ed. Roger W. Fontaine and James D. Theberge (New York: Praeger, 1976).
12. "Brazil-FRG Agreement on Cooperation in the Field of Peaceful Uses of Nuclear Energy," *The Brazilian Nuclear Program* (Rio de Janeiro: Federative Republic of Brazil, n.d.), p. 7; *Strategic Survey*, 1977, and *Strategic Survey*, 1978 (London: IISS), pp. 129, 139, and 138, respectively.
13. All a German spokesman could say in rebuttal was that the transfer of the fuel cycle "is less off-schedule than the construction of the nuclear reactors." See: Wolfgang Breyer in *Estado do Sao Paulo*, 20 September 1982, p. 26.
14. Similar charges are being made in Argentina. See *Buenos Aires Herald*, 20 November 1983, p. 1.
15. See Warren Hoge, "Angry Brazilian Chief Vows to Halt Rightist 'Thugs,'" *The New York Times*, 16 September 1980, p. A2.
16. *O Estado de Sao Paulo*, 24 September 1982, p. 26.
17. *O Estado de Sao Paulo*, 3 July 1983, p. 25.
18. *O Journal do Brasil*, 10 July 1982, p. 12.
19. *O Estado de Sao Paulo*, 25 November 1982, p. 34; *O Estado de Sao Paulo*, 24 September 1982, p. 26; and *Manchete*, 4 December 1982, pp. 76-84.
20. Richard House, "Brazil's Nuclear Dream Falters," *The Washington Post*, 12 February 1983, p. A8.
21. *Braslian Domestic Service*, 31 January 1984.
22. House, p. A8.
23. Such statements are apparently smokescreens. For example, the 1983 army budget was cut by 12 percent; however, it is expected that supplementary credits will be released later in the year—as has been the case in the past. See statement of General Leonidas Pires Goncalves, *O Estado de Sao Paulo*, 7 September 1982, p. 5.
24. For example, NUCLEBRAS announced in 1982 that \$100 million in supplementary funds would be contracted every year for the next ten years. See *O Globo*, 9 October 1982, p. 19.
25. See the breakdown of the scientific-technical development budget in *Correio Braziliense*, 21 January 1983, p. 11.
26. *O Globo*, 9 October 1982, p. 19.
27. For example, \$200 million from the International Bank for Research and Development (IBRD) was to be part of a five-year, \$500 million program to support scientific and technical development in Brazil beginning in 1984. See *O Estado de Sao Paulo*, 2 June 1983, p. 18.
28. The 1982 deficit of NUCLEBRAS amounted to about \$100 million. See text of NUCLEBRAS Annual Report for 1982, in *Correio Braziliense*, 12 April 1983, pp. 8-9.
29. *Journal do Brasil*, 16 October 1983, p. 1.

30. *TELAM*, Buenos Aires, 13 December 1983.
31. *A Energia Nuclear no Brasil* (Rio de Janeiro: Biblioteca do Exército Editors, 1979), p. 17.
32. *Folha de Sao Paulo*, 22 December 1983, p. 17.
33. *O Globo*, 29 October 1983, p. 16.
34. *O Estado de Sao Paulo*, 22 August 1982, p. 49. Yellow-cake is the final precipitate formed in the milling of uranium ores.
35. *O Estado de Sao Paulo*, 25 November 1982, p. 34.
36. *Folha de Sao Paulo*, 22 December 1983, p. 17.
37. *O Estado de Sao Paulo*, 2 July 1982, p. 29.
38. *O Globo*, 27 November 1983, p. 42.
39. *O Estado de Sao Paulo*, 24 September 1982, p. 26.
40. *O Globo*, 3 December 1983, p. 18.
41. *Latin American Daily Post*, 21 October 1982, p. 1; and *Latin American Weekly Report*, 31 July 1981, p. 10.
42. *The Evolving Strategic Environment* (Carlisle

Barracks, Pa.: US Army War College, Strategic Studies Institute, 1979), p. 17.

43. *Ibid.*
44. *Power Reactors in Member States*, International Atomic Energy Agency, Vienna, Austria, 1980, p. 24.
45. *The Military Balance*, 1981-1982 (London: IISS, 1981), pp. 93-94.
46. General Delio Jardim de Matta, air minister, announced the air force and the navy are jointly buying A-4s for the "Minas Gerais" in *Folha de Sao Paulo*, 25 June 1983, p. 6.
47. Nearly ten billion cruzeros (\$40 million, US) were allocated for 1983. See *Correio Braziliense*, 21 January 1983, p. 11.
48. *Correio Braziliense*, 11 December 1982, p. 5; and *Manchete*, 4 December 1982, pp. 76-84.
49. *O Estado de Sao Paulo*, 9 December 1983, p. 1.



THE SOVIET-BULGARIAN ALLIANCE: FROM SUBSERVIENCE TO PARTNERSHIP

by

MICHAEL BOLL

Relations among few postwar nations have inspired the charges of dependence and subservience assigned by Western observers as a result of the numerous treaties and agreements linking the People's Republic of Bulgaria to the Soviet Union. From the moment Soviet troops invaded this hapless state in September 1944, through the inevitable "democratic" revolution aided by the occupying Russian army, to the present, Bulgaria has been conceptualized as but a cipher in the complex Soviet plans for East European defense and the eventual extension of socialism throughout the globe. Rarely has Bulgaria made waves within either the Warsaw Pact or the Council for Mutual Economic Assistance (CMEA), the two multinational organizations most effective in promoting Soviet regional dominance. There has been no Hungarian-type uprising, no Prague Spring, no Gdansk Agreement in Sofia, and aside from an abortive military coup in the mid-1960s requiring no external "fraternal" assistance, Bulgaria has remained the model for relations among socialist states.

Given this close and enduring friendship between Moscow and Sofia, the contemporary analyst must wonder as to reasons for its apparent permanence. Bulgaria, aside from East Germany, is the sole Warsaw Pact member without a common land frontier with its Soviet ally, and the only state other than Romania devoid of Soviet troops. Certainly it

is not a direct threat of invasion from Moscow through renegade Romania that inspires continuing bonds of friendship. And the few Soviet soldiers on leave which a visitor to Bulgaria encounters now and then in provincial cities such as Burgas pose little danger. What then might account for this surprisingly close comradeship which has survived the ups and downs of nearly 40 years of postwar diplomatic change? Surely it is not the result of the often-proclaimed Bulgarian love for Russians, since such feelings did not prevent Bulgaria from being on the German side in both world wars. Certainly it is not a bond of "honor" and brotherhood among fellow communists nor an everlasting gratitude by the lesser-developed nation for economic services rendered; the Sino-Soviet split casts the lie to such assumed logical connections. Rather, the reason for the close Bulgarian-Soviet relations must be sought in a much more conventional explanation. Contrary to current Western belief, Bulgaria's relationship with the USSR is less one of dependence and more one of partnership. Within the Warsaw Pact and CMEA, the cooperation of these two states so dissimilar in size and potential provides needed system maintenance and combined efforts to expand the socialist system worldwide. Naturally this does not imply that Bulgaria, a nation of less than ten million, is equal to her Soviet ally in any given endeavor in which Moscow has chosen to participate fully. It does seem,

however, that the unique closeness of Soviet-Bulgarian relations results from the mutually beneficial role each plays in maximizing the values both perceive as fundamental to preserving and expanding the socialist commonwealth. While many examples of this symbiotic relationship could be cited, constraints of space suggest concentration upon but four: two reveal Bulgaria as the beneficiary of Soviet assistance, although in both cases Bulgaria assists her larger neighbor, and two are policy areas where Bulgaria plays a main role in advancing Pact and Soviet objectives in a fashion unavailable to the Soviets themselves. It is this dynamic interplay of gain and contribution which renews the Soviet-Bulgarian friendship on such a stable basis.

The area in which Bulgaria clearly has gained from her Soviet connection lies in the rapid economic development and modernization which characterized the past three decades. As party chief Todor Zhivkov indicated to a group of foreign delegates, the contrast between prewar Bulgaria and the present is stark.¹ According to a recent study, the 1939 ratio of output between agriculture and industry was 3:1. At present, it is 1:5, with the volume of industrial production currently 71 times the prewar figure. Machine tools account for half of all exports, and in the production of autos and electricity, Bulgaria ranks first in the Balkans on a per capita basis. The source for this startling change is freely admitted by Bulgarian economists. Ninety-five percent of current metallurgical production, 80 percent of oil refinement and petro-chemical production, and 70 percent of electrical output result from plants built with Soviet assistance.²

In the past decade and a half, Soviet efforts to modernize Bulgaria have begun to realize reciprocal benefits in unexpected areas. Given the much smaller dimensions of the Bulgarian economy, Moscow has viewed Bulgarian efforts as somewhat of an economic testing ground. The late 1983 Soviet decision to sanction the brigade form of labor organization as a part of the so-called Andropov reforms owes much to

extensive Bulgarian experience following the 1967 adoption of the Bulgarian Collective Farm Statute. The Soviet agro-industrial complexes, which assumed increasing importance in the Andropov period, were foreshadowed by the 1970 Bulgarian decision to introduce "the agricultural-industrial complexes as the most important form for the development of agriculture on an industrial basis."³ Presently, Moscow is reported to be closely watching the ongoing Bulgarian industrial reform introduced by Sofia in 1979 to provide greater incentive for local decision-making within a decentralized framework of economic investment.⁴

In Bulgarian thinking, the relationship between economic assistance and military preparedness is direct. As the Bulgarian Minister of Defense, Dobri Dzhurov, recently wrote: "The economic foundation of the indestructible union between the states . . . of the Warsaw Pact and their armies is the domination of the socialist principle of production."⁵ And judging from recent studies, the Bulgarian military, like the Bulgarian economy, has profited from extensive connections with the USSR.

The Bulgarian army consists of 120,000 officers and men arranged into eight motorized rifle divisions and five tank brigades. Bulgaria's military budget, in terms of gross national product, is proportionally half again as large as that of Hungary or Romania, and the Bulgarian armed forces are 50 percent larger than those of Hungary in absolute terms despite Bulgaria's possessing

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but 80 percent of the Hungarian population base. With one-third the population of Romania, Bulgaria has only 20 percent fewer men under arms.⁶ As Ivan Volgyes recently noted, "The Bulgarian army would be, most likely, the only main front-line force with which NATO members would have to contend in the southern flank as a unified national front and, consequently, the data regarding the Bulgarian People's Army should be carefully examined." Bulgarian units possess a high degree of mobility and more armor than comparable NATO divisions.⁷ With about three quarters of a million men in reserve, the Bulgarian military is a regional force of significance.

The importance of the Bulgarian army to the Warsaw Pact is obvious from the figures cited. Especially in a decade in which US strategists debate the relative merits of attrition or mobility, as well as the possibilities of horizontal escalation, a strong Bulgarian defense of the "soft underbelly" of Pact territory assumes central importance. Valuable for Pact cohesion is the presence of a Bulgarian officer corps patterned upon its Soviet mentor. It has become a "tradition," a joint Soviet-Bulgarian study states, to hold yearly meetings among Pact army leaders at which tactics are reviewed. Numerous high-ranking Bulgarian officers of diverse specialties have studied in Soviet military schools, acquiring a common set of military values in addition to specific instruction. Currently, 83 percent of the officer corps are members of the Communist Party.⁸

Close ties between the Bulgarian and Soviet militaries began shortly after the conclusion of World War II. Petar Panchovski, the Bulgarian Defense Minister from 1950 to 1958, fled to Russia in the mid-1920s, graduated from a Soviet military academy, and functioned as a staff member of the Soviet Third Ukrainian Army during the war. His successor, Ivan Mikhailov, graduated from Derzhenski Military Academy in Leningrad, later serving with Soviet forces. The present Defense Minister, Dobri Dzhurov, while possessing native credentials as the leader of perhaps the best-known Bulgarian resistance group of World War II, Chavdar, later attended Frunze Institute and

the Academy of the Soviet General Staff. To assist these Soviet-trained leaders, Communist Party units were established throughout the army, designed to promote a pro-Soviet viewpoint through extensive reeducation mandated for officers and men alike.⁹ Even the civilian sector was mobilized behind the military indoctrination drive, and by the early 1950s the various "sports groups" had merged into the Voluntary Organization for Defense Assistance (DOSO) constructed along the lines of the Soviet Voluntary Society for Cooperation with the Army, Aviation, and Fleet (DOSAAF). A decade later, DOSO claimed one and a quarter million members organized in 13,000 primary groups. Between 1950 and 1963, nearly one million were trained in marksmanship, 700,000 were trained in various technological skills, and 150,000 were instructed in the use of motorcycles.¹⁰ The current successor of DOSO, the Organization for Cooperation in Defense, has as its declared aim "to coordinate communist education with military-technical training among the broadest [possible] group of the population [with special emphasis upon] youth."¹¹

In view of recent Western speculation as to the role of the Warsaw Pact in precluding the formation of national defense plans among its members, a thesis formulated by Christopher Jones, evidence from Bulgaria suggests an interesting exception. While joint construction of an overall defense plan for the socialist commonwealth is acknowledged, Bulgarian military writers argue that this in no way precludes either national military "peculiarities" or individual national defense policy. Colonel Ivan Filchev maintains:

The contemporary internationalist character of military defense by no means signifies one ought ignore national military thought. On the contrary, while being guided by the common principles of collective defense, the military-scientific cadres of the fraternal armies work out important problems related both to the national defense of the state as well as the collective defense of the socialist community.¹²

Such national planning, Filchev states, occurs in the national military academies. The fact that the Bulgarian military considers tasks and techniques peculiar to itself is stressed by Defense Minister Dzhurov. Assessing Bulgaria's contribution to the general defense of its socialist neighbors, Dzhurov noted: "This however does not mean the mechanical application of the experience of one state in the practice of military construction in another. Every state has its own experiences and provides its own contribution to military science and the practice of military construction."¹³ A possible confirmation of this suggested independence of Bulgarian military planning for national defense was compiled by Ivan Volgyes in a recent study of reliability in the Pact's southern tier. Having noted that Bulgaria has engaged in the smallest number of combined Pact exercises (14 in the period 1961-79), Volgyes reached the startling conclusion that in only one exercise did the Bulgarian army fully participate. In all others, only a small Bulgarian force took part. Large-scale Bulgarian military activities remained confined to more conventional maneuvers within national boundaries, including a semiannual exercise of the "traditional army-oriented type."¹⁴

While the argument as to Bulgaria's preparation for national defense remains inconclusive due to lack of evidence, there is no question as to her ability to anchor the southern flank of the Warsaw Pact. A recipient of considerable Soviet training and treasure in the past four decades, Bulgaria's army has emerged as a reliable force, pledged to defend socialist gains against all foes. And not content to quietly await a possible assault through the Balkans, Bulgaria has devoted the past decade to neutralizing the potential threat posed by NATO's Balkan members. In this endeavor, Bulgaria has functioned as a valued surrogate for the USSR since direct Soviet pressure upon Turkey and Greece would bring an immediate NATO-wide response. In her efforts to improve relations with her southern neighbors, Bulgaria has been aided immeasurably by the ongoing Cyprus conflict, which pits NATO's eastern members at each other's throat.

In 1981, the year that socialist Andreas Papandreou was elected Prime Minister of Greece, Bulgarian party chief Zhivkov became a firm supporter of a plan designed to turn the Balkans into a nuclear-free zone. That prospect was first broached in 1957 as part of a Warsaw Pact approach to the issue of European security, but Romania remained its main supporter well into the 1970s. In the fall of 1981, however, shortly after the victory of Papandreou on a platform promising to remove American nuclear weapons from Greece, Zhivkov picked up the issue. As suspected, the initial meeting between the new Greek Premier and Zhivkov marked a new stage in the ongoing Bulgarian attempt to cement relations. Both leaders remarked "with satisfaction that relations of good neighborliness, understanding and cooperation between Bulgaria and Greece are rooted on a stable basis . . . and represent an important factor for strengthening the peace and mutually profitable cooperation in the Balkans." The two men affirmed the need to diminish world tensions and to resolve existing disputes "according to the established norms of international law and the charter of the United Nations." Both Zhivkov and Papandreou expressed satisfaction that in their review of contemporary international problems, "the number of issues on which the opinion of the two states coincides or is similar is broad." Included in this category of coincidence was condemnation of Israel for the 1982 invasion of Lebanon, complete with the standard demand for Israeli withdrawal from all lands occupied in the 1967 war.¹⁵ And yet it was with respect to Zhivkov's recent sponsorship of a nuclear-free zone that the greatest Bulgarian gain was scored. Speaking at an open press conference in the Bulgarian city of Varna, Papandreou announced:

The most important question . . . is the question of nuclear disarmament. On this issue, the position of the Bulgarian and Greek governments is identical. We, within the limits of possibility, will do all possible to convert the Balkans into a non-nuclear zone. I hope these efforts will lead to results in the near future.¹⁶

A meeting of the Bulgarian and Greek foreign ministers the following year reconfirmed the priority of the nuclear issue.¹⁷

In the spring of 1983, Greek Prime Minister Papandreou, consistent with his pledge to Zhivkov to do all possible to achieve the common aim, circulated a letter to his fellow Balkan prime ministers proposing a series of multilateral meetings designed to achieve a nuclear-free region. The first such convocation was suggested for Athens in early 1984.¹⁸ As expected, Bulgaria returned an immediate positive response, followed by similar acceptance by Yugoslavia and Romania. But Papandreou's rash action, taken before preliminary consultation with Greece's main Balkan enemy, Turkey, produced a less-than-positive response from Ankara. As the Turkish Foreign Minister Ilter Turkmen told a press conference two days after Papandreou's letter was announced, "Turkey views the security of the Balkans in the same way as the security of Europe, and [believes] that the security of the Balkans does not have a meaning on its own in the absence of a serious disarmament process in Europe."¹⁹ Yet while this Turkish answer indicated deep reservations, it did not preclude Turkish participation in the exploratory meeting subsequently scheduled for Athens in January 1984. At that gathering of Balkan experts, agreement was reached on a Turkish proposal to postpone consideration of the nuclear-free zone until sometime in the future.²⁰

The Turkish objection hardly dismayed the Bulgarian government, given the sharp distinctions between the socialist Greek administration and the military regime in Ankara. The fact that Papandreou had made his proposal served well the Bulgarian goal of precluding any future combined NATO threat in the region. And the fact that Turkey remains outside the growing Balkan consensus on the nuclear issue only inspires Bulgaria to redouble efforts to expand upon the many areas in which Turkey and Bulgaria increasingly find themselves in accord. In February 1982, Turkish President Kenan Evrem visited Sofia and acknowledged "that efforts to strengthen the atmosphere of trust

in the region represent a contribution for durable peace and for constructive cooperation in Europe."²¹ One year later, the Turkish Foreign Minister informed his visiting Bulgarian counterpart: "Relations with Bulgaria occupy a special place in our foreign relations. We have as our aim to develop the relationship on [the basis of] mutual trust, respect for independence, non-interference in internal affairs, and refusal from the use or the threat of the use of force in resolving disputed issues."²² While such Turkish pledges fall short of a promise to withdraw American nuclear weapons from Turkish soil, they do suggest that only the most serious global crisis might induce Turkey to forego nearly a decade of improved relations with her communist neighbor. Given the persistence of the Cyprus dispute, now intensified by the declaration of an independent Turkish federated state on the island, and in view of Bulgaria's evident military capability, the likelihood of any Turkish support for a NATO incursion into the Balkans seems remote indeed.

While Bulgarian efforts to protect the exposed southern flank of the Warsaw Pact through defense preparedness and focused diplomatic activity constitutes an important contribution to socialist security, it by no means exhausts Bulgarian endeavors. Since the 1950s, the USSR and her allies have waged a determined campaign to replace Western influence throughout the third world. Naturally it is the highly visible deployment of armed force, whether by the USSR in Afghanistan or by Cuba in Angola and Ethiopia, which attracts the most attention. But such activities are but the tip of the iceberg, the easily perceived results of a far more complex and all-embracing strategy designed first to neutralize and then to replace existing bonds between the developing world and the capitalist nations. In this campaign the various Soviet allies play a crucial role.

Bulgaria's mission within the overall strategy of undermining Western ties to developing states involves four distinct but related tasks: projecting the merits of

socialist economic development as the preferred means of rapid modernization; dispatching trained Bulgarian specialists to assist development of state-managed enterprises in third world states; expanding and strengthening the so-called "denial" clauses in the many bilateral security agreements now linking various third world states to the socialist bloc; and educating, advising, and training third world cadres in the proper method of social, economic, political, and party development. The second and third of these tasks are shared with other East European states, although Bulgaria has taken the lead in certain African countries. The first and fourth tasks are the most important assignments given Sofia. While precise figures are difficult to obtain, the presence of nearly 10,000 Bulgarian experts and advisers in Libya in 1978, about a third of the total number of Soviet and East bloc personnel in all of North Africa, provides some insight into the magnitude of the Bulgarian contribution.²³

Bulgaria's importance as a showcase for socialistic modernization arises both from the pace of her recent economic development and from the fact that like many third world states, Bulgaria too experienced centuries of foreign occupation by a country, Turkey, which held values alien to those of the colonized population. While the thought that Bulgaria could show the future to anyone in the area of economic development might strike the Western reader as doubtful at best, one must remember that to many lesser-developed states, Bulgaria is indeed an example of industrialization. As an African intellectual confided to this author in Sofia: "To achieve the levels of West Germany in the near future is beyond our wildest dreams. But to do what Bulgaria has done—ah, that is a different matter." The Bulgarian press is replete with admiring statements from numerous third world heads of state following their carefully planned tours of Bulgarian installations—an indication that the Bulgarian strategy is making some progress. Among the more interesting was the assertion by the President of Mexico during his 1979 visit to Bulgaria: "This is one of the

models which will be useful for us because . . . you have decided one of the most important problems confronting us at the moment: ownership."²⁴

As a part of its economic efforts, Bulgaria since 1976 has formed joint economic and technological committees with numerous African and middle Eastern states, including Angola, the People's Republic of the Congo, Ethiopia, Ghana, Libya, Mozambique, South Yemen, Tanzania, and Zambia. While the nature and number of agreements varies by country, the understandings with Angola provide indication of their scope. At present, Bulgarian-Angolan accords include a treaty of scientific and technological cooperation, Bulgarian construction of various production facilities, exchanges of documentation, cooperation in land reclamation, and the exchange of specialists and teachers. A separate trade agreement provides for most-favored-nation status and identifies the diverse goods to be exchanged. By the end of the 1970s, over 500 Bulgarians were advising Angola on economic development, and model rural cooperatives had been established, complete with Bulgarian specialists. While not given prominent place in the Bulgarian press, military ties also bind the two states, with the most recent exchange of views taking place during Angolan Defense Minister Tone's visit to Sofia this past spring.²⁵ Ties with Mozambique are equally impressive. Since 1975, Bulgaria has negotiated agreements for scientific and technological assistance, economic cooperation, trade, and mutual assistance in the fields of agriculture and food-processing. At the suggestion of the Bulgarian advisers, Mozambique in 1977 drafted a comprehensive plan for the rational use of water resources in the crucial Limpopo River Basin, a plan designed to run until the turn of the century. Similar extensive economic and developmental ties bind Bulgaria to Libya, Ethiopia, and South Yemen.²⁶

A quick glance at Bulgarian economic aid to the third world might lead one to conclude that altruistic motives were in evidence. But a closer analysis suggests that

such aid is part and parcel of a more complex, selfish objective. To both Bulgarian and Soviet theorists, the way of achieving socialism in third world states is through the promotion of the state economic sector in its competition with private sector rivals. As expected, Bulgaria's assistance is precisely in this domain. As explained by a leading Soviet expert on Africa and Director of the Institute of Africa at the USSR Academy of Sciences, successful socialist construction demands "consolidation and expanding of the public sector . . . on an anti-capitalistic basis, subordinating the various types of economic activity to the development of the leading one, that of a socialist nature, and creating the social and economic conditions for it to prevail."²⁷ Bulgarian aid is geared to this goal.

In conjunction with efforts to assist the public sector in developing states, Bulgaria also attempts to negotiate agreements prohibiting her partners from ever returning to the capitalist camp. The first such "denial" clause was contained in a 1976 Soviet agreement with Angola. It stated: "Both of the contracting states testify that they will not enter into alliances or accept participation in any grouping of states . . . directed against the other high contracting party."²⁸ Two years later, Bulgaria signed such an agreement with both Angola and Mozambique. In 1980 a similar clause was included in the Bulgarian-Ethiopian friendship accord, and in 1983 Bulgaria became the first Warsaw Pact state to negotiate such an understanding with Libya.²⁹ The Bulgarian-Mozambican and Bulgarian-Ethiopian agreements call for cooperation in military matters, but information on what this entails is scarce.

In addition to the above, one of Bulgaria's main responsibilities in dealing with the third world concerns training the revolutionary cadre in the emerging socialist states. In this area Bulgaria can function much more efficiently than the USSR since the presence of Russian nationals has produced a significant backlash in smaller and still suspicious African states—witness the problems in Egypt and Somalia. As

representatives of a nation of less than ten million, Bulgarian advisers attract less attention and less fear. Thus it is the very sensitive area of cadre development which Bulgaria targets as its main responsibility. The extent of its efforts is best illustrated by the numerous intra-party accords signed between the Bulgarian Communist Party and Frelimo, the ruling party of Mozambique. As identified in the Bulgarian daily *Rabotnichesko delo*:

The two parties will exchange working groups to study their experiences in party work in organizational areas, preparation of cadres and mass organizations. They will study party work in the socialistic reconstruction of industry and agriculture, and party leadership in socioeconomic activities, and in propaganda and ideological work. The two will bring about cooperation between socio-political organizations, will exchange informational documents and publications on internal and external policies, and will facilitate cooperation between central press organs. The two parties will exchange delegations at congresses, national conferences and other important celebrations. The Central Committee of the Bulgarian party will reserve stipends for training cadre in the academies of social science and for social administrators, and will send lecturers in the fields of party construction, party leadership, economics, education and culture.³⁰

Similar agreements and exchanges now exist with Angola, Yemen, Benin, Ethiopia, Libya, and Zambia, with the most recent accord being signed in October 1983 with the Revolutionary Party of Tanzania.³¹

The significance of these inter-party ties in which Bulgaria plays a leading role cannot be overestimated. If it is the predominance of the state sector over the private which signifies the transition to socialism in the third world, it is the determination and steadfastness of the respective national liberation front or revolutionary movement which governs the possibilities and bounds of such transitions. As the Bulgarian theorist

Khristo Mashkov noted, "The success of further revolutionary reorganization in those states with a progressive orientation depends upon the presence of a revolutionary organization which perceives the construction of socialism as its final goal."³² "History shows," a recent Soviet study on Africa concludes, "that any kind of isolation of developing countries from other streams of the world revolutionary process handicaps the struggle and sometimes leads to defeat."³³ Bulgaria is concentrating her efforts to insure that such "isolation" will not occur.

After nearly four decades of close Soviet-Bulgarian friendship, the younger, weaker state has begun finally to come of age. Dependent once upon Soviet assistance in everything from economic aid to protection against foes domestic and foreign, Bulgaria today stands on a more equitable footing with her giant ally. Yet the effects and potentials of this shifting relation have evoked little study in the West. Like devotees of abnormal behavior, we consider as significant only those East European changes which appear to deviate from the assumed Soviet model of development. Hungary is closely watched because of her liberal and unique economic reforms; Romania, because of her innovative foreign policy. The evolution of Soviet-Bulgarian ties toward partnership calls forth little concern although this development holds potential for far-reaching change.

More confident after 35 years of socialistic rule, modernization of a backward agrarian society, and creation of a ruling stratum benefiting from current domestic policy, Bulgaria may soon demonstrate increased attention to her own national objectives even when they conflict with those of her Soviet partner. The drive to secure good relations with NATO's Balkan members, while consistent with Soviet goals, may also be rooted in a desire to shift scarce resources toward further economic growth. The renewed dispute with Yugoslavia as to the past and future of Macedonia expresses Bulgarian territorial aspirations which were born long before the socialist age.

Thus, while the transition from subservience to partnership undoubtedly strikes Soviet leaders as a trip well taken, it ought to be perceived in the West as a journey not necessarily completed. Subservience, partnership, and then self-assertion is not a historic pattern devoid of precedent.

NOTES

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10. Ivan Filchev, *Voennata zashtita na sotsialisticheskoto otechestvo* (Sofia: 1978), p. 185.
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12. Filchev, p. 241. For the contrasting view see Christopher D. Jones, *Soviet Influence in Eastern Europe: Political Autonomy and the Warsaw Pact* (New York: Praeger, 1981).
13. Dzhurov, p. 148.
14. Volgyes, p. 27.
15. *R.D.*, 27 June 1982.
16. *Ibid.*
17. *R.D.*, 24 October 1982.
18. Athens Domestic Service in Greek, 16 May 1983.
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22. *R.D.*, 10 February 1983.
23. "Communist Aid Activities in non-Communist less Developed Countries, 1978," National Foreign Assessment Center, 1978, pp. 14, 20.
24. See *R.D.*, 29 May 1979, 2 August 1977, and 13 April 1979.

25. *R.D.*, 17 October 1976, 21 January 1976, 21 October 1978, 23 October 1978, and 21 April 1983.

26. For a useful summary of Bulgarian-Mozambican ties, see "Razvitie i zadulbochavane na otnosheniiata," *R.D.*, 24 October 1983.

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31. *R.D.*, 29 October 1983.

32. See *Politicheski agitatsiia*, 23 (December 1978), 73.

33. E. A. Tarabrin, ed., *USSR and Countries of Africa* (Moscow: 1980), p. 20.



MEXICO'S NATIONAL SECURITY

by

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Mexico faces two immediate challenges to her national security—an ongoing financial crisis and the potential spillover of the turmoil in Central America. As recently as five years ago, Mexico had no need for a fully integrated national security policy. Her new wealth seemed secure, as everyone expected oil prices to continue their upward trend and Central American problems appeared difficult but manageable. This article will attempt to demonstrate that Mexico has an increasingly effective national security policy; to detail its principal contents; and to show that through this more coherent approach to national security, Mexico stands a much better chance of maintaining its stability into the 1990s.

Traditionally, Mexico has relied for security mainly on socioeconomic actions backed by relatively unsophisticated and largely uncoordinated military and diplomatic efforts.¹ Over the last few years, Mexico's leaders have evinced increasing cognizance of the socioeconomic and financial implications of the debt crisis and the turmoil and expanding militarization to the south. Further, the leadership has recognized that Mexico possesses valuable and tempting strategic assets. Finally, Mexico's leaders perceive a growing need to stop the link-up of Central American revolutionary forces with potential rebels in Mexico's southern states. Mexico has therefore developed, in the last couple of years, its ability to implement an increasingly sophisticated national security response to these challenges, incorporating well-balanced

and coordinated financial, socioeconomic, diplomatic, and military actions.²

The effectiveness of Mexico's national security policy is of more than passing interest in the United States because we clearly have vital interests at risk. The two nations share a 2000-mile border, through which each year millions of Mexicans and Americans cross legally as businessmen or tourists and more than a million Mexicans cross illegally in an attempt to find work. At present this border requires no defense. In the event Mexico were to shift sharply rightward or leftward as a result of policy changes occasioned by either the financial or regional crisis, however, she might possibly open her economy further and draw even closer to the United States while at the same time instituting harsh repressive measures against all opposition, thus risking a civil war; conversely, Mexico might close her economy,³ seek closer ties with the Soviets and Cubans, and move as has Nicaragua to place close to ten percent of her population under arms. If either of these extreme scenarios were to take place, the defense requirements of the United States would expand significantly. The latter scenario, especially, would work to the detriment of what should be the overriding US strategic goal for the hemisphere, that of maintaining it as an economy-of-force area. Both for the sake of our neighbor to the south and to protect our own interests, we want a democratic, stable, and prosperous Mexico. As US Ambassador to Mexico John Gavin put it, "We have with Mexico a marriage without possibility of divorce."⁴

Mexico's national security policy is best defined by explaining her responses to the twin crises—financial and regional. In its 1983-88 National Development Plan, the Mexican leadership defines national security as ensuring peace and justice internationally and the integral development of the nation internally.³ This broad definition is brought into better focus by looking at the socioeconomic, diplomatic, and military programs put in motion to respond to the financial and Central American crises.

THE FINANCIAL CRISIS

The current financial crisis presents an unprecedented threat to the social and political fabric of Mexico.⁴ Support for what has been one of the most stable political systems, not only in Latin America but in the entire third world, is in jeopardy. The system's centerpiece, the Institutional Revolutionary Party, has maintained control largely as a result of being able to deliver an improved standard of living for the Mexican people. Since World War II, party leaders have been very successful in doing that, as the average annual economic growth rate has been roughly six percent. In the period 1978-81, however, the average economic growth rate rose to over eight percent. This superheated pace of economic growth unfortunately brought on inflationary pressures, an over-reliance on imports, and excessive public sector external borrowing.⁷ The latter rose at an alarming rate from 1980 to 1982. In 1980, the public sector debt was \$33.8 billion. In 1982 it had increased to about \$58.9 billion. Roughly a third of this debt was to come due within two years. Indeed, 1982 was the breakpoint for Mexico's economy.⁸

As a result of this excessive public sector spending that forced large-scale borrowing, Mexico suffered the equivalent of an economic meltdown. The drop in oil prices, worldwide recession, overeager foreign bankers willing to lend at one-half percent over cost, official malfeasance, and simply a boom that took place too fast to be properly controlled also played significant parts.

Subsequently, inflation rose to 100 percent for the first time in 50 years. Mexico's gross national product dropped five percent. Unemployment doubled to roughly 20 percent. With underemployment at or near 25 percent, almost half the work force was under or unemployed.⁹ Internal saving dropped in real terms by 13 percent.¹⁰ Over \$20 billion left the country as a measure of the lack of confidence of the monied class in Mexico's financial future. Without the dollars to continue to protect the price of the peso, it has been devalued from 25 to 195 to the dollar since February 1982.

All of this has shattered the Mexican people's confidence that their economic bubble would never burst. In order to meet the crisis, the government of Mexico rescheduled \$20 billion in public sector short-term debt so that it could be paid off in eight years with a four-year grace period instead of in two years as originally scheduled. In December 1982, the government accepted International Monetary Fund guidelines for a three-year stabilization program. The IMF program consists of a \$3.9 billion extended facility loan to Mexico, available over a three-year period. Disbursements are linked to progress toward Mexico's economic adjustment goals. The basic goal has been to reduce the ratio of public sector deficit to gross domestic product from close to 18 percent in 1982 to 8.5 percent in 1983, 5.5 percent in 1984, and 3.5 percent in 1985. The IMF program also calls for constraints on the

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rate of increase of Mexico's external public sector debt owed to commercial banks. A ceiling of \$5 billion was placed on such borrowing for 1983. Restraint on monetary and wage policies was also required. The program hopes to set the stage for strong and sustained economic growth.¹¹

As a means of meeting IMF guidelines, the Mexican government has undertaken a ten-point "Immediate Program for Economic Reordering," the central objectives of which are to combat inflation, protect employment, and recover the basis for an efficient, just, and dynamic development process. The program focuses efforts on reducing the growth of public sector spending; protecting employment; continuing works in progress to improve the administration of public sector spending; encouraging programs for production, importation, and distribution of basic foodstuffs; increasing public sector income through tax reforms and higher prices for public sector goods and services (lowering or removing subsidies); channeling credit effectively to limit inflation; ensuring "recovery" of the foreign exchange market; restructuring the public administration; and maintaining the principle of having the state as rector of an economy entailing both state and private ownership.

So far, program results have been good, especially regarding its financial aspects. Mexico experienced a balance-of-payments surplus in the first nine months of 1983 of over \$3 billion. This was accomplished mainly by cutting imports from \$14 billion in 1982 to \$9 billion in 1983. Mexico has also managed to lower the rate of debt increase to only 3.4 percent since December 1982, and has increased public sector revenues by 122 percent.

Mexico is clearly meeting IMF constraints with her ten-point program. The only worry at this point is whether her excellent financial reordering effort went too far in the sense that the productive sector may have been badly hurt by lack of imports. In this regard, the private sector experienced a 71-percent drop in imports in 1983. As Mexico hopes to get the economy going in 1984, the

productive sector must have the imports needed to produce. In 1983 Mexico experienced, as mentioned previously, a five-percent economic decline. The reality behind that figure is that companies either cut back drastically on production and employees or went out of business. Companies barely managed on what little imports they could obtain, import substitution, or a combination of both. The Mexican government hopes for a one-percent growth rate in 1984, followed by a return to growth rates somewhere around six percent in future years. There is some doubt, however, that she will achieve a fully recovered economy given the damage done in 1983 by the sharp cutback in imports.¹²

Much will depend on how well the Mexican government can get public and private sector enterprises motivated to increase production of products that satisfy internal demands and also can compete in international markets. With the government owning roughly 60 percent of all national productive capacity, and with a less-than-dynamic private sector that is at the same time suspicious of the government, that will not be an easy task. A better balance between financial reordering considerations and necessary imports, and the transfer of some state-owned assets to the private sector, should receive greater emphasis in 1985. Encouragement of foreign investment should also be stressed, and there are signs now that this is occurring.¹³ Private sector confidence must be restored if Mexico is to achieve the goal of economic revival and a return to reasonable growth rates in the six-percent range.

Considerable time has been spent explaining how Mexico is dealing with the most immediate threat to her national security—the financial crisis—in order to make clear the sophisticated nature of her response and Mexico's commitment to it. Part and parcel of this effort includes an equally sincere determination to ensure that austerity is not borne excessively by the disadvantaged sectors of society. This is why maintaining employment is given such a prominent part in the program. From January to July 1983,

Mexico claimed to have created 300,000 new jobs despite her still-ailing economy. She did this by focusing on productive and socially useful work in urban and rural areas, reorienting investment to labor-intensive activities, and promoting support for middle-sized and small businesses. This is a considerable improvement over 1982, when unemployment rose considerably. Mexico's goal for 1983 was to create 500,000 to 700,000 new jobs. Given their difficult economic situation in 1983 and realizing that employment data is very soft, it is most likely that they reached only the lower end of that range, which would mean a remaining shortfall of probably 300,000 jobs, since roughly 800,000 new job-seekers appeared in the market that year.¹⁴ The Mexican government is also ensuring that prices of a well-defined list of basic foods are controlled, so as to keep them within reach of the masses.

Finally, despite the austere nature of the 1984 budget, major emphasis continues to be placed on social development by providing an increasing percentage of the budget to socially-related areas. The key areas in this regard are education, health, social security, rural development, and the employment program, which comprised 35.3 percent of the budget. Other areas of indirect social importance are regional development, ecology, communications, and transportation, which accounted for another 13.9 percent, making a total of almost half the budget invested in socially-related programs. By contrast, the Mexican military received only 1.9 percent of the 1984 budget, roughly \$575 million. Additionally, the 1984 budget of \$42 billion, though 50 percent higher than the 1983 budget, decreased in real terms from 1983's total of \$28 billion considering the 80-percent inflation rate.¹⁵ Regardless, the budget reflected a real social concern, which is one of the primary contributing factors to the Mexican government's political legitimacy, stability, and national security.

THE CENTRAL AMERICAN CRISIS

Mexico's involvement in the growing turmoil in Central America began when

Mexico withdrew recognition of the Somoza government. The decision to become more heavily involved in Central American affairs has had direct national security effects requiring development of a finely balanced foreign policy using all elements of power. Mexico seeks to protect her interest in regional stability and to minimize foreign influences in the area. Her policy also works toward enhancing Mexican influence and revolutionary prestige, promoting internal stability, and maintaining to the extent possible correct and friendly relations with the United States. The policy is based on traditional Mexican support for self-determination, nonintervention, dialogue with understanding, and peaceful settlement of disputes. These principles have been stretched to a degree over the past five years, but generally they undergird Mexico's foreign policy in support of her national security.

What, then, has Mexico faced since 1978 as a result of her decision to become more actively involved in Central America? First, in a definite break with her past noninterventionist position, she chose to help a popular revolution in Nicaragua. Her natural sympathies for the revolutionaries and abhorrence of what Somoza represented made this position initially quite easy. Also, her new oil wealth gave her a growing sense of power. These factors, combined with an apparent diminished US interest in the subregion, created a natural opportunity to increase Mexico's international prestige and burnish the party's revolutionary credentials at home; these positions were adopted in part to keep the domestic left at bay and in part to adopt a foreign policy position consistent with the liberal views held by many of Mexico's top political leaders.¹⁶ In the beginning all of this could be accomplished simply by supporting the good guys (the Sandinistas) against the bad guys (the Somozistas). As time passed, however, Mexico's involvement became deeper; the July 1979 broad-based movement against Somoza quickly converted itself into a state retaining some pluralistic features, partially as a result of European and socialist-influenced assistance, but one increasingly

dominated by Marxists and beholden to the Eastern bloc. As East-West competition over the subregion sharply increased, namely in El Salvador and Guatemala, Mexico found that more important Mexican interests were challenged as the growing turbulence moved closer to home.

Guatemala's instability was most directly felt, given its long border with Mexico. Specifically, the 1982 "beans and bullets" program (Plan Victoria 82), implemented in rural areas by General Rios Montt with its "you're with us or you're dead" approach, drove 30,000 to 35,000 Guatemalan refugees across the border into Mexico's state of Chiapas. The increasing turbulence clearly threatened Mexico's interest in regional stability and, should the Central American conflict spill over, would threaten even her internal cohesion.

How is Mexico responding in order to protect her national security? While deploring conversion of Central America into an East-West battleground, Mexico stresses that regional violence has its origins in long-standing socioeconomic neglect and frustration of the peoples' political will. Mexico would like to see both superpowers retire from the area so that the issues could be settled by regional players alone, including those countries who border on Central America to the north and south (Mexico, Panama, Venezuela, and Colombia). With this as the essential intellectual underpinning for actions in support of her interests, Mexico's policy toward Central America consists of using diplomatic and economic tools externally, military and socioeconomic ones internally.

By 1981 Mexico had begun in earnest to urge negotiations in order to resolve disputes between the United States and Cuban-backed Nicaragua resulting from Nicaragua's support for the spread of subversion in Central America and most specifically in El Salvador. At the time, the United States viewed Mexico's efforts as not exactly those of an honest broker, in that Mexican sympathies seemed to be on the side of Nicaragua. Mexico appeared to believe, as did some other regional countries (i.e.

Panama, Colombia) that the United States was the root cause of area problems through continued support for what these countries viewed as hopelessly reactionary regimes. Deep suspicions of US interventionist tendencies engendered by historical experience also informed these commonly held views and made it difficult—indeed, they still make it difficult—for Mexico to take a completely objective position regarding the facilitation of negotiations.

By 1983, however, the Mexican position had become somewhat more evenhanded. As Nicaragua's revolution tended more and more toward Marxism-Leninism and 8000 Cubans arrived in the country, Mexico urged the Sandinistas not to push their private sector completely out of the country. They also became one of the prime movers in the formation of what has come to be known as the Contadora Group. This group of four countries (Mexico, Panama, Venezuela, and Colombia) has moved steadily toward resolution of regional conflict. While much remains to be done, by September 1983 the group had helped Central American countries define 21 objectives for which specific agreements needed to be worked out. The salient points include no export of subversion, reduction in arms and force levels, gradual drawdown and removal of foreign advisers, perfection of pluralism, and appropriate verification procedures. In January 1984, agreement was reached to form three working commissions on security, political, and socioeconomic affairs. The work plans of these commissions include development of a registry showing installations, weapons, and troops from which to negotiate ceilings to restore the regional military balance.

Mexican-US goals are the same in that both want regional peace, pluralism, and stability. The difference with regard to Nicaragua lies in greater Mexican ability to accept a government whose electoral process will probably not be totally free, but which at least for now seems to represent a majority of the people. Mexico hopes to use its influence to nudge the Sandinistas into a variation of their own political model and away from a Marxist-Leninist orientation. The United

States has established four measures that Nicaragua must take if it desires improved relations. Primary among these, the United States wants free and open elections and appears willing to accept nothing less.¹⁷ The United States still views Mexican actions as tending to sweep Nicaraguan faults under the rug, as providing the Sandinistas unmerited legitimacy, and as too trusting of a basically Marxist-Leninist regime. Recent Nicaraguan moves to grant limited amnesty and to liberalize past repressive action affecting church, press, labor, and political freedoms are seen by the United States as tactical moves to lighten US and international pressures.¹⁸ On the other hand, Mexico tends to believe they are signs of progress which should be given time to develop.

Turning to economic actions, we find that Mexico has done much to help regional countries regardless of their position on the political spectrum. For example, through the apolitical joint oil facility agreement with Venezuela known as the San Jose Accord, Mexico in 1983 provided \$180 million worth of oil savings to Nicaragua and millions of dollars as well to El Salvador. This was accomplished by cutting 20 percent off the market price. In the case of Nicaragua, Mexico has been the major supplier. Venezuela stopped supplying her share of the 13,000 barrels per day Nicaragua needs because payments even at the reduced rate could not be made. This situation has provided Mexico at least a modicum of influence in Nicaragua, although Mexico reportedly also slowed oil shipments recently pending payment of old oil bills.¹⁹

Reviewing the challenge that Mexico faces in Central America and her political and economic responses, it appears that Mexico has gained. Her regional influence and prestige have increased. The United States appears to be more accepting of her political actions, although irritations persist in the US perception that she still favors Nicaragua too much. Given Mexico's abundant oil reserves, she has provided real economic assistance to regional countries at little cost. Despite some negative political impact resulting from the general public's

resistance to what they view as give-away programs during a period of extreme austerity, Mexico's revolutionary credentials have been burnished and the domestic left satisfied. Finally, there is just a chance that the combination of US pressure and Mexican diplomatic efforts, along with those of Panama, Venezuela, and Colombia, may, despite operating on separate tracks, produce a viable peace.

Given Mexico's past and present conditions, her actions on balance appear to be prudent and supportive of her long-term national security, especially those aspects pertaining to preventing the spread of revolution to Mexico itself, and, as discussed in detail below, continue to improve the Mexican military. Despite continued austerity, the Mexican military will continue to improve, though it will take longer to reach their goals than originally thought.²⁰

This article has up to this point focused on how Mexico's national security policy has been defined by socioeconomic and foreign relations responses to the financial and Central American crises. The next part will spell out how the Mexican military contributes to national security policy through direct support in meeting these crises, as well as through its efforts to modernize organizations, equipment, and military education—all of which adds up to expanding military influence in national security affairs.²¹

THE ROLE OF THE MILITARY

The Mexican military's growing role in the national security equation can be traced to the 1968 Tlatelolco tragedy, which resulted in many deaths. This watershed event—the culmination of years of political frustration which manifested itself increasingly in student protests, antigovernment propaganda, and ever more violent riots—served as a catalyst which caused Mexican political and military leaders to begin a shift in direction. The Aleman administration (1946-52) had initiated a trend toward limiting political opposition and favoring the industrial sector, a trend brought to a peak by the Diaz Ordaz

administration (1964-70). This generally conservative bent clearly needed toning down if widespread unrest and increasing communist influence, supported by the Soviets and the Cubans, were to be avoided.

This shift in political direction led to the realization that Mexico needed a more modern, sophisticated, and professional military if future internal security challenges were to be successfully met. Fortuitously, the decision to change approaches coincided with the ending in 1970 of an era of secretaries of national defense who came into the military during the Mexican Revolution (1910-20). The advent of secretaries of national defense with more formal military educations began with General Cuenca Diaz (1970-76) and facilitated progress toward measured military modernization. Gone were the days when the military would turn monies back to the government to curry favor. A new sense of partnership and trust between military and civilian leaders was beginning to form.²²

This new reality and the military influence which grew from it, combined with the effects of modernization itself, formed the principal and interrelated driving forces behind the Mexican military's emerging role in the national security process. Over the last 14 years, modernization has moved forward in three main areas—organization, equipment, and military education. Organizational changes, while not spectacular, have been steady since 1970. A military police brigade and an airborne brigade were formed from battalion-sized units. Two additional infantry brigades were put together from existing units, making a total of three infantry brigades including the already existing Presidential Guards Brigade. An armored infantry unit was formed in 1980. It is possible that an armored brigade, with this unit as the nucleus, either has formed or will form when the financial crisis eases. To provide a better span of control, nine military regions were established to control various military zones. The cost of building new installations will probably slow further organization along brigade lines; however, contingency plans most likely include paper brigades with staffs and units designated.

These paper units are exercised during the annual December maneuvers.

Another important organizational change involves the National Military Service system. This program underwent extensive overhaul during General Galvan's tenure as secretary of national defense (1976-82). Essentially, training responsibility shifted from special units commanded by old, "semi-retired" officers to young, aggressive battalion and regimental commanders. This improvement was significant since the program reaches, in terms of its patriotic message, much of the nation's youth.

With respect to equipment additions, these have been both domestically produced and purchased from a variety of Western nations. Mexico's Department of Military Industry, while not quite ready to challenge Brazil as an arms producer, has made respectable progress in terms of producing German G-3 rifles, DN-III armored vehicles, and light trucks. Surface-to-surface rockets are also being worked on, but are still in the experimental stage. With regard to principal purchases from abroad, Mexico has bought 12 F-5 aircraft from the United States; 40 Panhard ERC-90 armored vehicles from France; roughly 57 Pilatus aircraft from Switzerland; two *Gearing*-class destroyers from the United States; and seven amphibious craft, a sailing ship for training, and six *Halcon*-class frigates from Spain. The Mexican navy has also built additional 40-foot *Olmecca*-class patrol boats. Finally, Mexican vehicle production has permitted all but one cavalry regiment to be converted from horse to motorized cavalry units. Most of this accelerated progress was made possible by President Lopez Portillo's decision to exploit Mexico's petroleum riches.

In terms of far-reaching change, progress in military education has had and will have the greatest effect on military influence in national security matters. At the lowest level of officer training, the military academies have undergone curriculum improvements to provide better preparatory education. Mid-level officer education at the Superior War School, which generally takes place five years after graduation from the

military academy, provides an additional three years of studies, mostly on military subjects but also on international law and geopolitics, approximating a college education. The recently inaugurated National Defense College, which graduated its first class in 1982, is the capstone of the Mexican military education system. It provides studies on national and international security matters, military strategy, and resource management, and it incorporates one foreign and one domestic trip. While the college is still in the throes of understandable growing pains, its curriculum and methodology are comparable to that of war colleges in Latin America and in the West in general.²³ National Defense College graduates receive the equivalent of a master's degree in military administration. From the ranks of these graduates will come the generals who will fill the highest military positions. These graduates will probably also be the ones selected to fill key appointive political positions, such as governorships. It is hard to say whether military men will be given more political posts, but it can be said that the ones filling key military positions with high political involvement, such as those of zone and region commanders, will be much better qualified. Their opinions will be listened to with greater respect by their civilian counterparts. The college's full potential will probably take a generation to realize; nevertheless, the college puts the Mexican military in a much better position to participate effectively in national security actions.

In addition, a trend toward younger senior general officers was becoming evident toward the end of the Lopez Portillo period. If this continues, it will tend to add to the military's influence in the sense that younger, more vigorous officers will have more in common with the generally younger civilian leadership. The accelerated retirement of older general officers which began in the late 1970s also is having a good effect on the overall vigor of Mexico's general officer corps. All of these factors add to the potential for the Mexican military to play a greater role in national security affairs as a

result of increasing capacity, and this trend will pick up pace once the current period of austerity ends. Mexico's National Development Plan promises that the military will not be allowed to fall behind the rest of society again, as it did in the quarter century after World War II.

THE MILITARY'S GROWING INFLUENCE

First a few words should be said about military influence before enumeration of those areas where the Mexican military's expanding role in national security matters is already being felt. The Mexican military's influence stems from three realities—proven institutional loyalty, pervasive presence both geographically and in government agencies, and increasing sophistication through rapidly improving military education.

In recent times, the Mexican military's institutional loyalty has been proven time and time again. General Barragan, secretary of national defense under President Ordaz, steadfastly supported the president during the 1968 Tlatelolco incident. General Cuenca Diaz stood behind President Echeverria both during the 1971 Corpus Christi march disturbances and during the period of land invasions and financial crisis that occurred in 1976 at the end of Echeverria's tenure in office. In the most recent and severest financial crisis, the Mexican military has stood staunchly behind the government and proclaimed its institutional loyalty to the government and the constitution at every opportunity. Their acceptance of less than two percent of the budget year after year, even in good times, speaks eloquently for their support of the system. In my view, nothing short of total governmental collapse would cause the Mexican military to take the reins of power which they relinquished to civilian control in the 1940s. Since then, generations of officers have developed professionally under civilian rule and are proud of the exceptional political stability that their system has afforded the country. Additionally, most Mexican officers owe

everything they have to the current system, as most come from lower-middle- and lower-class backgrounds. Finally, the Mexican military lacks the political and technical sophistication to confront the nation's problems, and the military leaders know it.²⁴

The military's pervasive presence is felt geographically in the military zone system with its hundreds of detachments spread throughout the country, where often the citizens' only contact with the government is the local detachment commander. Within government, military men or former military men fill numerous posts on the police forces, both state and federal. The best example of this is the naming of a professional soldier, General Mota Sanchez, to the post of chief of Mexico City's police force. Where there is a personal or family relationship, military officers are sometimes selected to work for governors and cabinet heads. The Presidential General Staff, which performs functions similar to those of the White House staff in the United States, is also almost totally military. Additionally, there has usually been a small number of military men in the Mexican Congress. In all of these instances, the military institution gains not only a presence but information, and information is easily translated into influence.²⁵

Since I have already addressed military education, suffice it to say with respect to the military's influence that a military leadership with an increasingly sophisticated educational experience will be better able to contribute effectively at the national level on matters within its purview. This more able participation will in turn give the military a more respected voice within the councils of state, in effect providing them with greater influence.

While external factors such as the financial and Central American crises, combined with the new-found oil wealth, contributed to the Mexican military's growing role in national security matters, the interrelated factors of increasing influence and modernization have probably played the greatest part in this phenomenon. What it all boils down to is that the Mexican government

needs the Mexican military more than ever. As a result, the ability of the military to deal intelligently with the enormous strengths and weaknesses of Mexican society must grow so the military can be an effective member of the government's team.

How has the Mexican military's growing national security role manifested itself in the last few years? First, in support of socioeconomic efforts, military civic action programs have expanded and received much greater emphasis since their beginnings in the 1960s. The list of the military's civic action programs is long and covers a vast range of activities. It includes reforestation; participation in medical efforts against malaria; restoration of schools, using national military service and rural defense force volunteers; prevention of cattle rustling, again using military service volunteers and rural defense forces; escort service for the railroads; security backup to police forces in case of civil unrest and patrolling of highways during national holidays; disaster relief operations; anti-narcotics operations; providing water to remote areas; protection of national treasures, such as archeological sites; immunization programs; and construction of housing and rural roads.²⁶ Of these many programs, disaster relief and anti-narcotics efforts are areas where the army's public role has increased to the benefit of the nation's security. The army's prominent role in the handling of the Chichonal Volcano eruption disaster in the spring of 1982, wherein the secretary of national defense took personal charge of the operations, underscored the military's increasing importance in this type of operation and its ascendancy over civilian elements when disaster strikes. The national security plus for the government derives from the increased respect and confidence the public has in their military forces and, through them, in the government of Mexico. The Mexican army's role in anti-drug operations under the Mexican attorney general's office expanded sharply in 1977 with the establishment of the Plan Condor Task Force to combat drug traffickers in the states of Chihuahua, Durango, and Sinaloa.

In 1983, this program was expanded with similar but smaller-scale operations, beginning in the states of Oaxaca, Guerrero, and possibly Veracruz. These latter operations have intensified long-standing army efforts in each of these states. Again, this increased effort, along with the military's continued acceptance of a low percentage of the budget, has had important national security implications not only in combatting what drugs can do to society but also in complicating the inevitable alliances between criminal elements and potential insurgent forces.

With regard to actions that serve to counter Central American spillover dangers and buttress internal security, signs of a growing military role in this effort can be seen in General Galvan's effort to strengthen the *partida* system, which, as alluded to earlier, involves hundreds of detachments of varying size spread throughout all parts of Mexico, even the most remote. This system has been improved through General Galvan's insistence that these groups become, in effect, operational bases from which patrolling of an area takes place and not just groups of soldiers providing a presence in one geographical location. The extended coverage provided by this new approach ensures that most citizens feel a positive government presence in their lives. This presence is a vital national security component whose lack has facilitated the rise of rural-based insurgencies in many Latin American countries.

The rural defense corps concept has been going on for many years and primarily provides the army and the government additional loyal eyes and ears in the countryside. Indications are that plans are being made to streamline and improve the effectiveness of these forces, which reinforce the military presence provided by the *partida* system, in that these rural defense forces are drawn from Mexico's communal farm system (the *ejido* system).

With regard to military presence, since the mid-1960s the Mexican military has more than doubled in size.²⁷ As Mexico recovers from the current financial crisis, it is likely that the military's dormant plans for force expansion will be revived. It is possible that

by the early 1990s Mexico's armed forces will reach a level of 140,000 to 150,000. This assumes a considerably slower rate of growth than the last 20 years, given the larger base upon which to build. If this expansion occurs, it will assist Mexico greatly in fulfilling her internal security mission. As things stand now, reinforcement of the southern border area means leaving other parts of Mexico unprotected by military forces.

Another sign of the growing military internal security role is the creation in 1983 of one more military zone (the 36th military zone) with headquarters in Tapachula, Chiapas. This zone is clear evidence of the concern that Mexican national authorities have for what is going on in Central America and its spillover potential. Some spillover has already occurred, with over 30,000 Guatemalan refugees occupying camps in Mexico's state of Chiapas. This state now has two military zones, the 31st in the state's capital, Tuxtla Gutierrez, and the 36th in Tapachula. Only two other states have more than one military zone, oil-rich Veracruz and the traditionally troublesome, aptly named state of Guerrero.

The nature of Mexico's concern over her southern border—where rural poverty and land disputes are exacerbated by oil-driven cost-of-living increases, refugees, and Guatemalan revolutionaries intermingling with Mexican leftist sympathizers—is made clear by two key appointments. The first was the naming of a former 31st military zone commander, General Castellanos Dominguez, as the state's governor. The second was the appointment of General Cervantes, who had extensive counterinsurgency experience in the battle against Lucio Cabanas a decade ago in Guerrero state, as the 31st military zone commander. Clearly, the military will be playing an increasing role along Mexico's southern frontier in terms of getting to know the people and the terrain, conducting expanded civic actions, and signaling to potential troublemakers of the left or right that trouble will be stopped before it can get underway. This role, however, will be a defensive one; practically, the Mexican military lacks a sustainable offensive punch,

and beyond that, offensive operations go against the principles upon which her moral power is based. Mexico would stand to lose more by undertaking offensive operations than she could possibly gain.

At the national level, there is a possibility that a national security council with supporting staff and specialized committees will be formed. This organization would consist of the president, the secretary of national defense, the secretary of government, the attorney general, the secretary of programming and budget, the secretary of the navy, and the secretary of foreign relations. Certain police agencies might also be included. The organization would provide more coherent national security planning and would institutionalize even further the military's voice in national security affairs. Finally, in the last few years there has been discussion of integrating the armed forces under a minister of defense. In the unlikely event that this concept should be undertaken, it would clearly strengthen the military's national security role.²⁸

CONCLUSIONS

Mexican national security rests on the triple pillars of her financial and socioeconomic actions, foreign relations, and military actions. These elements constitute the main components of a national security policy which promises to help Mexico meet the immediate financial and longer-term socioeconomic challenges while she concurrently works to resolve regional turmoil and inoculate Mexico against its effects. The Mexican military is playing an increasingly active role as these challenges grow, both in assisting to improve socioeconomic conditions through expanded civic action programs and in developing improved capabilities to meet future threats to sovereignty and internal security.

Based on these policy directions, and keeping in mind that there are no guarantees, confidence in Mexico's future stability and the survival of its governmental system against the dangers of revolutionary change would appear to be well placed. First of all,

while Mexico is far from out of the economic woods, she has succeeded in restructuring at least \$20 billion in public sector debt and as of June 1984 appears to be on the way to restructuring the other \$40 billion of public sector debt due in 1985-88.²⁹ New challenges will probably confront Mexico in the next few years, but a proven team of financial experts led by Finance Minister Silva Herzog should prove able to meet whatever difficulties develop. More critical will be Mexico's ability to expand her exports so that they are not so oil-dependent. Petroleum now accounts for at least 60 to 70 percent of her exports. Also, much will depend on the pace of the US economic recovery and how this affects worldwide recession, as well as on the availability of new capital so that Mexico can fully implement her ten-point economic program and regain solid growth in her economy.

With respect to the other major challenge, that of Central America, Mexico's Contadora Group participation and oil facility agreement with Venezuela have done much to defuse the spread of regional violence. Whether peace can be achieved remains to be seen, but at least there are agreed-upon objectives—a direction to take now, where before there was none. Trust is the commodity which is in short supply and which must be present for Mexico and the other Contadora Group countries to achieve the success they deserve for their efforts.

Clearly, the Mexican military will play an increasingly important and sophisticated defensive role in developing, supporting, and implementing national security policy. Through general modernization of equipment, organization, and especially military education, the Mexican military is better prepared to meet successfully future threats to the southern states, with their vulnerable oil fields, pipelines, and border areas. The Mexican military's increasing influence, gained by improved capabilities coupled with iron discipline and obedience to the system, is reflected in the appointment of increasingly forceful and respected secretaries of national defense. Potential plans for a more formal national security apparatus should provide a

strengthened institutional framework within which the military can make appropriate national security contributions.

In short, Mexico's system will survive because she has not forgotten her people; she has a sophisticated foreign policy and an increasingly effective military, especially with regard to internal security, whose loyalty appears solid beyond question. As a senior Mexican general said recently: "We have had these crises before, and we have weathered them. We will survive this one too."

NOTES

1. Olga Pellicer de Brody, "La Seguridad Nacional en Mexico: Preocupaciones Nuevas y Nociones Tradicionales," a paper presented in a seminar on a socioeconomic analysis of the relations between the United States and Mexico at Stanford University, November 1980, pp. 13-17.

2. Space limitations only permit acknowledging that other important national security factors exist. These would be US-Mexican relationships, moral renovation, demographic initiatives, the critical role of labor forces, the political liberalization engineered by President Lopez Portillo which facilitated participation by marginal political parties, and increased use of the Revolutionary Nationalism theme to warn of alien ideologies and promote unity now being stressed by President Miguel de la Madrid. Finally, Mexico's strengths and weaknesses have been well covered elsewhere. They will not be repeated here except to note that the Mexican army is not modernizing to project power, but to be better able to defend itself from externally supported internal subversion. Attack from without is not considered likely. In any event, Mexico could do little outside of guerrilla resistance to a US invasion, nor need it fear Guatemala acting alone. In a worst-case scenario involving a united leftist Central America, Mexico would probably turn to the United States for help. For an excellent review of Mexican strengths and weaknesses, see the article by Norman Gall, "Can Mexico Pull Through?" *Forbes*, 15 August 1983, pp. 70-79.

3. According to the US State Department, we have a direct investment in Mexico of close to \$6 billion, and roughly \$24 billion in bank loans. Mexico is our third largest trading partner, as we account for two-thirds of Mexico's imports. In 1981, this amounted to \$17 billion of business to US firms. Since then, as a result of Mexican efforts to diversify and, more importantly, to the financial crisis, Mexican imports of US goods have dropped dramatically to approximately \$5 billion in 1983. Mexico, our primary supplier, is a near and ready source of significant amounts of still-needed petroleum through supply lines relatively immune to interdiction. The United States imports close to a million barrels per day of Mexican oil. By her own estimate, Mexico has 72 billion barrels of petroleum liquids in her proven reserves and is clearly a major petroleum power. She is in fact one of the top four oil nations today when the key factors of crude oil reserves, production, and exports are considered. Her petroleum industry infrastructure is extensive and well developed. Daniel Levy and Gabriel Szekely, *Mexico: Paradoxes of Stability and Change* (Boulder, Colo.: Westview Press, 1983), p. 213; Allen

W. Lloyd and Associates, "Lloyd's Mexican Economic Report" (February 1984), p. 4.

4. Gall, p. 79.

5. Government of Mexico, Federal Executive: Programming and Budget Secretariat, "National Development Plan 1983-1988," May 1983, p. 59.

6. This is so whether you believe that crises are endemic to the Mexican system and that if none are in prospect, the Mexican leadership will create one to foster needed change and revitalize the Revolution within PRI ranks; or whether you simply feel that the system is corrupt and in process of being increasingly overwhelmed by events. Both of these alternate views distort reality. But they do capture some of it.

7. United States Embassy, Mexico City, "Foreign Economic Trends and Their Implications for the United States," FET 83-078, October 1983, p. 3.

8. Government of Mexico, Treasury Secretariat, "Monthly Treasury Report," September 1983, p. 3.

9. "U.S., Mexico Favor Diverging Paths, Similar Goals," *ARA News Roundup*, 6 September 1983, p. 19. Official sources hold Mexico's unemployment at or slightly below ten percent.

10. "Monthly Treasury Report," p. 3.

11. "Foreign Economic Trends and Their Implications for the United States," p. 3.

12. "Monthly Treasury Report," p. 2, and discussions with Mexican Embassy, State Department, and International Monetary Fund officials. "Balance of Payments," in *Annual Report of the Bank of Mexico*, 1983, Appendix 4, pp. 103-16.

13. "Lloyd's Mexican Economic Report," June 1984, p. 4.

14. "Monthly Treasury Report," p. 8. Programming and Budget Secretariat, *Tenth General Census of Population and Housing*, 1980, August 1981, p. 15.

15. Government of Mexico, Presidency of the Republic, "Mexican Federal Government Budget," December 1983, pp. 49-50. The Mexican military, however, has access to special presidential funds as well as to profits generated by their equivalent of US Army commissaries and the AAFES exchange system. The F5 purchase may have come from special presidential funds.

16. Carlos Rangel, "Mexico and Other Dominoes," *Commentary*, 71 (June 1981), 29, 33.

17. Langhorne A. Motley, "Is Peace Possible in Central America?" U.S. Department of State Current Policy Paper No. 539, 19 January 1984, p. 3. Other measures involve an end to support for guerrilla insurgencies and terrorism, severance of Nicaraguan military and security ties to Cuba and the Soviet Union, and reductions in military strength to restore a balance with neighboring states. Along with establishment of a genuine democratic regime, the United States views these measures as fully consistent with Nicaragua's 1979 commitment to the OAS and her September 1983 commitment to negotiate a treaty that would implement these goals.

18. *Ibid.*, pp. 2-3.

19. Leslie H. Gelb, "Mexico Is Cooling on Latin Rebels, U.S. Officials Say," *The New York Times*, 19 July 1984, p. 1. As the title suggests, there are straws in the wind that indicate Mexico's patience with the Sandinistas may be wearing thin, as is perhaps also the case with their support for El Salvadoran guerrillas. Still, it is too early to tell whether Mexico will stop straddling the fence and converge more with US policy. Clearly, chances for such an outcome increase as centrist forces in the region gain strength. "Managua Gets Bulk of Oil from Soviets," *The Washington Post*, 16 August 1984, p. A1.

20. Information contained in this section was developed during conversations with American Embassy personnel in

Mexico, Central America, and the State Department in Washington. The conclusions, of course, are my own. I also owe Professor Edward J. Williams a vote of thanks for sending me excellent papers which he wrote on Mexico's politico-military realities and their relationship to Central America. Data on San Jose Accords were obtained from G. W. Grayson, "Oil and Politics in Mexico," *Current History*, 82 (December 1983), 419.

21. A very brief review of the general organization, force levels, and mission of the Mexican armed forces indicates that they currently contain approximately 125,000 men, organized as follows: the Defense Secretariat (army and air force) has 98,000, with roughly 92,500 men in the army and 5,500 men in the air force; the Naval Secretariat has 27,000 with 22,000 in the navy and roughly 5,000 marines. There are during any one year an additional 250,000 young men training at varying intensities in the National Military Service program, which provides a manpower pool indoctrinated in national values and in basic military skills for the reserve system—a system which is analogous to our individual ready reserves. The Mexican military's mission consists of protection of the national sovereignty and frontiers, internal security, anti-narcotics efforts, and civic action missions.

22. David F. Ronfeldt, "The Mexican Army and Political Order Since 1940," The Rand Corporation, 1973, p. 29.

23. With regard to the broadening of the senior (COL/BG) Mexican army officers' professional horizons, the National Defense College devotes 39 conferences to the national and international situation, 13 conferences to national policy, 10 conferences to national security, 15 conferences to administration of the Defense and Navy Secretariats and 12 conferences to high-level staff studies. The foregoing represents only a portion of the overall curriculum, but demonstrates the emphasis on developing politico-military expertise, to include management at the highest levels.

24. Professor Edwin Lieuwen of the University of New Mexico, author of many well-known works on militarism in Latin America, including *Mexican Militarism: The Political Rise and Fall of the Revolutionary Army, 1910-1940*, holds a different view. Essentially, he believes that the Mexican military lacks the power to take over. Consistent with his theory that improved levels of professionalism mean less

likelihood of military coups, he indirectly suggests that the Mexican military is still at a low level of professionalism. Therefore, were they to have the physical means to grab power, they would do it. My view is that they are at a reasonably high level of military professionalization, and that they do have sufficient power to stage a coup. They do not choose to do so because they are happy with the present political system, which despite its problems remains viable. In Mexico's case, system viability is the key variable, not physical military power or levels of professionalism.

25. The Mexican military leadership probably has no formal mechanism set up to take advantage of the information acquired by its personnel assigned outside the military. For the most part, these people are not tasked to report back to the National Defense Secretariat. Nevertheless, the experience that low- and mid-level personnel gain in these endeavors does help the military understand the problems faced by other governmental groups, which leads to better civil-military relations and ultimately to increased military influence. At higher levels, especially among security agencies, coordination and information exchange are clearly facilitated by military men who operate in or take charge of civilian police forces or work in the Government Secretariat.

26. Jesus de Leon Torral et al., *The Mexican Army: History from Its Origins Until Today* (Mexico City: Secretariat of National Defense, 1979), pp. 520-25.

27. Edwin Lieuwen, *Mexican Militarism: The Political Rise and Fall of the Revolutionary Army* (Albuquerque: Univ. of New Mexico Press, 1968), p. 146.

28. Information in this section is primarily based on three years of observing and working with the Mexican army, from 1980-83, as US Assistant Army Attaché. I am also indebted to Major Stephen J. Wager, Assistant Professor of History, United States Military Academy, for the valuable insights provided by his unpublished manuscript dealing with "The Modernization of the Mexican Military and Its Significance for Mexico's Central American Policy," 27 October 1982. Finally, I would like to express my appreciation for the valuable comments, suggestions, and insights provided by Dr. Caesar D. Sereseres of the University of California at Irvine.

29. James L. Rowe, Jr., "Loan Terms to be Eased for Mexico," *The Washington Post*, 6 June 1984, pp. 1, 22.



VIEW FROM THE FOURTH ESTATE

THE IMPACT OF SURPRISE AND INITIATIVE IN WAR

Correlli Barnett

The "View From the Fourth Estate" is normally a piece reprinted from the popular media that focuses on the activities of American military forces. For this issue, however, we have chosen an article written by an outstanding British military historian, Correlli Barnett, on a topic—surprise and initiative—that has great pertinence in the application of AirLand Battle doctrine.

* * * * *

On 21 March 1918, at 4.40 am, a gigantic enemy offensive opened against an overstretched British front. First came a five-hour bombardment by 6,500 guns firing a mixture of HE and gas shell. The fall of shot was devastatingly accurate, cutting landlines, smashing up battery positions, wire, infantry positions, headquarters; smothering the depth of the British defence zone with respiratory and mustard gas. All this in darkness and morning fog. The bombardment reduced the British defenders to isolated, uncoordinated units of gassed and blasted troops. A British heavy artillery officer recalled later:

I awoke with a tremendous start, conscious of noise, incessant and almost musical, so intense that it seemed as if a hundred devils were dancing in my brain. Everything seemed to be vibrating—the ground, my dugout, my bed . . . It was still dark.¹

The sun rose at 6 am, but the fog still lay thick along low ground, and thickest in the valley of the River Oise on the Fifth Army's right. The bombardment reached its climax with a stunning five-minute smash with HE at the British forward zone. Without a pause the guns switched to a creeping barrage, and the specially-trained German "attack" divisions swarmed forward

after it. These "attack" divisions had been trained in infiltration tactics, with a premium on leadership and initiative from junior leaders at the sharp end. The offensive was to pour through the British defences like a tide coming through a rocky shore, avoiding points of tough resistance in order to make deep penetrations. The German training pamphlets were revolutionary for the Great War and the Western Front:

The objective of the first day must be at least the enemy's artillery; the objective of the second day depends on what is achieved on the first; there must be no rigid adherence to plans made beforehand . . . The reserves must be put in where the attack is progressing, not where it is held up.²

21 March 1918 saw these precepts put into effect with devastating effect. Let me cite the signal book of a British infantry brigade major to show what it was like on the receiving end. By 6.50 am, there was no communication by cable forwards or rearwards or to flanking brigades. By 10.30, one company had lost 40 out of 150 men. At 11.15 came a report from a captain who had seen a mob of his soldiers running rearwards towards his battalion HQ. So ran his signal: "I was told that the enemy had broken through and was upon us." At 11.45 a signal to brigade reported that the front line "gave way at 10.15 hrs."³

By the end of 21 March, the Germans on the Fifth Army front had broken clean through the British defensive system, and the great "March Retreat" had begun.

Here then were all the elements of surprise and initiative, and allied to enormous weight of numbers. Certainly the British command was fully aware of the gradual concentration of this mass of

40 divisions; they knew that a great offensive was likely around the date it took place. But from all their own experience in past offensives, they never contemplated a break-through in a single day followed by a relentless exploitation. Surprise came in the hurricane bombardment instead of the ponderous week-long preparations in earlier battles, and its devastating effects on the British defences and command and control systems. And the initiative was shown by the German regimental officers and NCOs exploiting every weak chink at utmost speed. Of course, that very initiative was in itself a surprise.

Yet after a week the German offensive had ground to a halt without achieving its strategic objective of dividing the British from the French and driving the British back to the Channel ports. Partly this was because of sheer fatigue in the frontline troops; partly the logistic problems in the days of largely horse transport of keeping the attacking mass supplied and moving. But it was also because once the first shock and breakthrough were over, the British Third and Fifth Armies, or rather, the fighting units in the battle zone, began to display their own initiative. Indeed, the German offensive never really achieved momentum on the Third Army front. What had seemed on 23-25 March like the disintegration of the Fifth Army into uncontrollable retreat had two days later turned into the beginnings of a stabilised front. To take one example, XIX Corps covering Amiens with six battle-worn divisions in line fought off an attack by eleven German—not just by passive defence, but by enterprising counter-attacks in brigade strength to recapture key tactical points like villages, or exploit weaknesses or gaps in the German forward dispositions. Says the British official history:

Considering the weak numbers and the exhaustion of the infantry, and the inadequate training of the majority of the regimental officers of the Fifth Army, the troops showed remarkable powers of resistance on the 27th. Not only did they hold the enemy's advance with little loss of ground, but they also often counter-attacked with success.⁴

The German 1918 March offensive illustrates two general points. The first is that surprise, for all its value, is a rapidly wasting asset if it cannot be converted quickly into a permanent grasp of the initiative. The second is that in a dispersed and shapeless battle like the March Retreat, the issue

turns on the enterprise and leadership of small units at the front end, which cumulatively adds up to the out-fighting of the enemy.

Clausewitz's definitions

When considering what is meant by "surprise" and "initiative," and their potential impact on the course of a campaign, reference can be made to the greatest of all thinkers on war, Carl von Clausewitz, who said:

Surprise . . . lies more or less at the foundation of all undertakings, for without it the preponderance at the decisive point is not properly conceivable. The surprise is, therefore, not only the means to the attainment of numerical superiority; but it is also to be regarded as a substantive principle in itself, on account of its moral effect. When it is successful in a high degree, confusion and broken courage in the enemy's ranks are the consequences; and of the degree to which these multiply a success, there are examples enough great and small. We are not now speaking of the particular surprise that belongs to the attack, but of the endeavour by the distribution of force to surprise the enemy, which can be imagined just as well in the defensive, and which in the tactical defence particularly is the chief point.⁵

What then are the essential ingredients of surprise? Says Clausewitz:

Secrecy and rapidity are the two factors; and these suppose in the Government and the Commander in Chief great energy and on the part of the Army a high sense of military duty.⁶

It could be said that the classic illustration of Clausewitz's definition of surprise and its vital ingredients is the German breakthrough on the Meuse in May 1940, with the massing of the panzer divisions opposite the weakly manned Ardennes sector of the French front. They deployed along the Meuse itself three days before the French, calculating on their own slow performance, thought it possible. Then there was the tactical surprise and rapidity with which the German infantry crossed the Meuse in rubber boats while the Luftwaffe kept the French defenders' heads down. And then occurred Clausewitz's "confusion and broken courage in

the enemy's ranks in a high degree . . . " as the French infantry and gunners panicked to the rear. The speed of the German exploitation with armour enabled them to hold the initiative they had seized by surprise. From that tactical success on the Meuse flowered the great strategic success of the drive to the Channel coast and the isolation and final destruction of the allied Northern Army Group.

Although, obviously, the initial attacker, like the Germans in 1918 and 1940, must have an advantage of surprise denied to the defence, it is the defence's turn once the moment comes for the counter-stroke. It is as well to remember what Clausewitz has to say about the correlation of the defensive and the offensive in terms of inherent advantages and disadvantages—not least the question of timing a counter-stroke. He was first to point out what is now a commonplace—that the defensive is the stronger form of war, and can successfully be conducted with inferior numbers. But he also says that defence is not merely passive, but contains an important element of the offensive within it. In his words, "We can in a defensive campaign fight offensively; the defensive form in War is no mere shield but a shield formed of blows delivered with skill." More than this, the defensive at the right moment becomes a sword:

A swift and vigorous assumption of the offensive—the flashing sword of vengeance—is the most brilliant point in the defensive; he who does not at once think of it at the right moment, or rather he who does not from the first include this transition in his concept of the defensive will never understand the superiority of the defensive as a form of War.⁴

Well, what is the right moment for the counter-stroke? Whether on the local tactical level, or the strategic, it is when the enemy attack reaches what Clausewitz calls "the culminating point of victory." Even a successful attack loses weight and impetus the longer it continues—attrition of men and equipment; fatigue; logistic problems. It was certainly true of the German 1918 March offensive, as we have seen. True again of the allied sweep into Belgium and up to the German frontier in 1944 after the battle of Normandy. The question is, can the attacker achieve a final victory and peace before his offensive strength wanes too far? The Germans failed in 1918 and succeeded in 1940; the allies failed in 1944. Writes Clausewitz:

If a preponderance on the side of the attack, although thus daily diminishing, is still maintained until peace is concluded, the object is attained . . . The majority [of strategic attacks], on the contrary, lead only to the point at which the forces remaining are just sufficient to maintain a defensive . . . Beyond that point the scale turns, there is a reaction; the violence of this reaction is commonly much greater than the force of the blow. This we call the culminating point of the attack.⁵

The most dramatic historical illustration of this concept is the Battle of Waterloo, when the French army ran out of offensive puff without achieving a decision, and the allied counter-stroke led to the total disintegration of Bonaparte's forces. But the same pattern can be seen in the Battle of Moscow in 1941 and the Battle of Stalingrad in 1942. In each case the German offensive impetus passed its culminating point without victory being achieved; the offensive impetus petered out to a standstill. At that moment came the Russian "flashing sword of vengeance"—in 1941 tumbling the Germans back from Moscow; in 1942 beginning a strategic reaction that finished up in Berlin in 1945. Says Clausewitz, "Everything then depends on discovering the culminating point by the fine tact of judgment."¹⁰

The importance of timing

You can equally miss the moment by being too early or too late; or falling in the middle between being too late tactically but too early strategically. To give an example: when the Germans got across the Meuse near Dinant on 15 May 1940, they at first only had infantry over without tanks or artillery. Had the French armoured division behind this sector attacked them then, it could have achieved a decisive tactical success. Because of various delays and muddles, it only went into action a day later when the Germans had got tanks across the river, and it failed. It was tactically too late, also strategically too early, because the Germans were then only at the outset of their colossal gamble of a strategic march by the panzer divisions right across northern France. The British tank attack near Arras on 21 May, even in a strength of only 74 tanks and two battalions of infantry, caught the Germans at a moment when they were far stretched, with highly exposed flanks, and when the German

command was beginning to worry about the risks they were taking. Though the British attack only achieved a temporary and local success, its psychological impact travelled all the way up the German hierarchy, and contributed to the Führer's order to halt the panzers instead of using them to finish off the British Expeditionary Force (BEF). This was a remarkable example of a strategically well-timed counter-stroke on an enemy approaching the culminating point of victory.

Timing, then, is an essential key to the counter-stroke, multiplying the physical and moral impact of surprise. But let us consider the nature of "surprise." Evidently, concealment and deception are vital to it—either by masking the existence, location or size of the counter-stroke force, or by tricking the enemy as to its purpose and thrustline. In autumn 1944, allied intelligence plotted the build-up of German strength west of the Rhine before the Ardennes offensive, but chose to believe that it was purely for defensive purposes. The German command fostered this illusion by only concentrating the strike-force in its assembly area at the last moment. But surprise is not just an absolute, or black-and-white, matter of being totally undetected before the event; it is relative to the enemy's own expectations. Thus, the French perfectly well knew between 10 and 13 May 1940 that powerful German forces were deploying along the Meuse; no surprise by that time. The surprise lay in the Germans attacking three days before the French thought they could be ready. In the early months of 1941 and again the same period in 1942, British intelligence in the Middle East pretty accurately plotted the build-up of Rommel's strength round El Agheila; but working on British staff assumptions they reckoned he could not be sufficiently strong to attack for at least another month. Hence Eighth Army's enormous surprise when Rommel did the allegedly impossible or militarily unsound thing of attacking much earlier.

Surprise in terms of defying the enemy's expectations can extend beyond the tactical or strategic pattern of the battle to organisational or logistic matters.

Organisational and logistic surprise

Firstly, organisational surprise: in 1914, the Germans completely upset the pre-war French calculations as to the possible width of the German attacking line under the Schlieffen Plan by fielding reserve corps alongside their regular corps. Unlike the French reserve formations,

which were poorly trained and equipped and fit for nothing much else than guarding railway sidings, the German reserve corps had been trained and rehearsed to full campaign worthiness. The German line therefore extended well beyond the French left flank, posing a deadly danger that forced the French to abandon their own offensive and hastily re-make their battle.

Secondly, logistical surprise; that is, by enabling an army to march and fight where the enemy believes it must run out of supplies. After the Dieppe raid in 1942, the German high command calculated that if it could hold the Channel and Atlantic ports, an allied invasion army could not logistically undertake operations deep into Europe. This calculation was rendered futile by the invention of the Mulberry harbours, through which came the bulk of allied supplies right up to the end of 1944, so enabling the Allied Expeditionary Force to reach the German frontier. Another example: ever since Malaya in 1941-1942 the standard Japanese ploy had been to hook round the road-bound British, and cut them off from their supplies, whereupon the British duly went off rearwards in search of tinned bacon.

In 1943 in the Arakan, the Japanese ploy failed for the first time. They did the usual hook round the British and surrounded them in what was known as the "Admin Box," but this time, instead of cutting their way out to the rear, the British stayed put—thanks to air supply. After a fierce battle and heavy losses, the Japanese drew off with a bloody nose.

But no kind of surprise can succeed without initiative on the part of the units concerned; without the ability to spot and exploit a fleeting opportunity. Only with this quality of initiative on the part of the defending force can the defensive attain the character of an ambush in which a momentarily unbalanced or unwary attacker can be stopped or even destroyed. Let us consider some case studies which illustrate these concepts.

We will look at smaller unit actions first—up to a brigade in strength—and then go on to the role of surprise and initiative in major counter-strokes.

The point about successful displays of initiative on the part of small units is that their impact can actually be decisive in terms of a major battle as a whole.

Chamberlain at Gettysburg

My first case is where the destiny of a great nation depended in a very real sense on the initiative shown by a battalion commander and his battalion. The commander was Colonel Joshua

Chamberlain of the 20th Regiment of Infantry, Maine Volunteers, in the Union army at the Battle of Gettysburg in July 1863. This was the crisis of the American Civil War. On the Union side the previous two years had seen nothing but disaster in the principal theatre of war south of Washington. Hardly two months before Gettysburg, the Union Army of the Potomac under new commander, Joseph Hooker, had been shatteringly defeated at Chancellorsville by inferior numbers. There was heavy discouragement in the North among the troops and civilians. Democracies, as we know, get restive in the absence of quick victories. Lincoln faced a presidential election in 1864—how would that go if his armies were beaten yet again at Gettysburg? On the Confederate or Southern side, long-protracted war must end in defeat because of Northern weight of numbers and industrial resources. Victories like Chancellorsville could only buy time, not win the war. The only hope of that lay in invading the North and destroying the Union army on its own ground. Hence the march that led Robert E. Lee's Army of Northern Virginia to Gettysburg and a confrontation with the Army of the Potomac under its new general, Meade. Now, the left of the Union line at Gettysburg came to rest on a hill called the Little Round Top. The southern face of the slope was held by a brigade of four regiments, of which the 20th Maine was one. In fact, it was the 20th Maine that held the extreme left of the entire Union line. To their flank there was nothing, and to the rear only baggage wagons and the army's communications with Washington.

If the Confederates could break or turn the Union left they would drive Meade off his communications and away from the capital. In the course of Longstreet's great attack on the first day of the battle against the Union left, a Confederate colonel by the name of Oates climbed the Big Round Top, the hill adjacent to the Little Round Top, and saw in enfilade the entire five-mile Union line as far as Gettysburg itself—saw the Little Round Top—saw the enemy baggage train to the rear. Oates realised that once he could pass his troops round the Little Round Top, he could launch them into the Union rear. He started on his march. But Colonel Joshua Chamberlain of the 20th Maine spotted Oates's force approaching his flank at a time when his own regiment was already heavily engaged on its front along with the rest of the brigade. He could not change front without either yielding important ground or losing touch with the regiment on his flank and opening a gap.

Without hesitation, however, he ordered the four companies on his left to form front at right angles to his existing line, while at the same time his other five companies formed from double into single line to hold the same width of front as that originally held by the whole regiment. Hardly had the 20th Maine carried out this operation under fire when the Confederates attacked what had so recently been their open flank and rear. A bitter fight ensued in which Chamberlain's regiment fired off all their ammunition (60 rounds a man) in less than an hour-and-a-half. By this time the heavily outnumbered 20th Maine had been forced back until a successful Confederate assault would have driven them into the rear of the Union Army. And there was no more ammunition. Once more Chamberlain's initiative equalled the emergency. He ordered the regiment to charge, pivoting on the right so as to hold the junction with his neighbouring regiment. An eyewitness said that the 20th Maine looked as if it were moving like a great gate upon a post. The Confederates, their own offensive impetus exhausted, temporarily off-guard, were swept away. The Little Round Top was held. The left wing of the Union Army remained secure. Chamberlain's opponent, the Confederate Colonel Oates, wrote afterwards:

His skill and persistency and the great bravery of his men saved Little Round Top and the Army of the Potomac from defeat. Great events sometimes turn on comparatively small affairs.¹¹

Encounter at Ypres

Now a British example, from the First Battle of Ypres in November 1914. This was the last great encounter battle before the Western Front calcified into trench warfare. Each side was trying to break through and turn the enemy's flank before the stalemate reached the North Sea. But it was the Germans who succeeded in concentrating the more powerful forces. In late October, the battle took on the character of a desperate allied effort to hold off a German offensive. And the British Expeditionary Force, the old regular army, stood in the very track of the German storm. Indeed, it was Haig's I British Corps that took the real brunt. The British Army had no reserves and faced an enemy at least twice their strength, and with an enormous superiority in firepower. The battle could only be a hand-to-mouth affair, shoring up weak points in the line with units composed of anyone who could fire a rifle. A

battle that therefore depended entirely on the initiative of unit commanders in the flux of the fighting, and the fighting spirit of their soldiers.

The supreme German effort to break through to Ypres and then the sea was launched on 31 October. The main axis was astride the road from Menin. The British were outnumbered six to one in rifles and field artillery, and had virtually no heavy artillery to counter-fire the powerful German heavies. As the British Official History sums up the apparent situation:

A decisive victory seemed assured; for everything pointed at the British being completely exhausted. And they may well have appeared so to the enemy. The line that stood between the British empire and ruin was composed of tired, haggard and unshaven men, unwashed, plastered with mud, many in little more than rags . . . ¹²

Under the sheer weight of the German attack on 31 October, the British line began to sag and crumble by midday. To give you an idea of the ferocity of the fighting, the 2/60th Rifles had over 400 casualties, while the 2nd The Royal Scots Fusiliers had already lost half of the 172 fusiliers left after the previous day's losses. Gheluvelt was lost, unhinging the British defence. It looked to the C-in-C, Sir John French, as if at last the way was open for the German masses to crash on to the coast. All that remained to him by way of fresh reserves was the 2nd Battalion The Worcestershire Regiment, in a strength of 500 officers and men. The local brigade commander gave them the simple order: Re-take Gheluvelt. Soon after 2 pm the Worcesters attacked in the middle of a scene of disaster and retreat. They caught the German spearhead troops at an unguarded moment of temporary pause and over-confident belief that only exhausted and defeated British troops lay opposite them. In other words, the Germans lay at a tactical "culminating point of victory," enjoying a moment's rest, searching for water, looting. The Worcesters' attack achieved complete tactical and psychological surprise, and they exploited the surprise to the utmost by their élan. More than four times their number of Germans broke and ran, and the most dangerous of all the dangerous moments of the First Battle of Ypres had passed.

Von Luck in Normandy

Of the many possible case studies in World War II of how initiative on the battlefield can

sway the course of a campaign, let us consider that of Oberst von Luck in Normandy in July 1944. As you will remember, Operation Goodwood was intended by Field Marshal Montgomery to break through the German defence east of Caen and gain a wide tract of open country even as far as Falaise. The plan called for a carpet of destruction by heavy bombers of Bomber Command through the German defence system composed of a deep web of fortified villages, followed by an advance by three armoured divisions, initially one behind the other, with an infantry division (one of them the 3rd) as flank guards on either side.

Two of the armoured divisions, 11th and 7th, were to strike south-westwards over the Bourgebus Ridge, while Guards Armoured swung south-eastwards toward Vimont. In all about 800 tanks rolled forward on 18 July 1944 after the bombers had done their stuff. The German fortified villages gave the armour a lot of trouble, slowed it up badly, and caused some splendid traffic jams, and eventually the leading British tanks seemed poised to take the Bourgebus Ridge, the key to an exploitation towards Falaise. From the German point of view, it looked as if a skilled and tenacious defence in depth was at last about to be cracked by sheer weight of armour.

At this point Oberst von Luck, freshly back from three days' leave in Paris, steps into the picture. He was officer commanding a panzer grenadier regiment in 21 Panzer Division, and his sector included the village of Cagny, lying on the left flank of the British advance. Visiting his front to find out what was left of his regiment after the bombing, he spotted some 60 British tanks moving in the direction of the Bourgebus Ridge—actually the 3rd Battalion, Royal Tank Regiment, the lead unit of 29th Armoured Brigade. What von Luck also saw were four 88 mm guns in the village of Cagny belonging to the Luftwaffe, along with a Tiger tank and an 88 mm anti-tank gun. The Luftwaffe's 88s were still pointing skyward in their anti-aircraft role. Von Luck thereupon ordered the Luftwaffe officer in command to shift his guns to the north-west corner of Cagny, and take the British armour coming down the breakthrough corridor in enfilade. The Luftwaffe officer, however, said his mission was air defence and that he was responsible to the Luftwaffe command; tank-killing was not his job. Von Luck—this is where a sharper kind of initiative comes in—thereupon drew his pistol and asked the Luftwaffe officer, and I quote from von Luck, "if he would like to be killed immediately or cooperate. He decided the latter." In short order five 88s and the Tiger were blasting the British unit

to the rear of the 3rd Royal Tanks, in fact the Fife and Forfar Yeomanry. With 16 tanks quickly knocked out and the Fife and Forfar stopped, the whole British advance became a milling traffic jam. Even the movement of the third British armoured division, Guards Armoured, towards its south-eastwards thrustline was stuck. 7th Armoured at the rear was like the last vehicle to joint the tail of the jam. Thanks to von Luck, the German moment of crisis was over; more German artillery and tanks began to take the close-packed British armour in front and in the flank, Tigers against Shermans. The British command struggled to sort out the jam and get the offensive moving again, but by the end of the afternoon the lead armour was stuck well short of the Bourgebus Ridge, let alone Falaise.

We will turn now to examine some examples of surprise and initiative on the part of commanders of larger formations—from a division up to an army.

The Duke of Wellington

The Duke of Wellington is so often regarded as the master of the static defensive that it is easy to forget what a bold and brilliant opportunist he could be. Easy, too, to forget the part played in his successes by enterprising leaders further down the hierarchy. We will first consider Wellington's routing of Marshal Soult at Oporto in Portugal in May 1809. I should, of course, say "Wellesley" at this stage. The position was that he had already cleared the French out of southern Portugal. Soult was hanging on at Oporto on the northern side of the Douro, a deep, swift and wide river at this point. Wellesley could field some 16,000 British soldiers and 11,000 Portuguese, the latter not yet worth much. He had no engineers, no siege artillery and he was short of field guns. Soult had 23,000 French veterans well posted behind the river. The one bridge had been blown, there were no fords, and Soult had all boats removed to the north bank—as he thought. Soult felt pretty secure—too secure. While he was still asleep and his staff were having breakfast, Wellesley was reconnoitring in person, and sending off officers to search for at least one boat. The key to the French position, Wellesley saw, lay in a large building on the north bank surrounded by a wall with only one gate. If that could be seized, the French would face a lodgement in the heart of their line. But that meant boats. While various pessimists on his staff were proving to each other that no boats could be found, Wellesley was heard to say: "By God, Waters has done it!" And

Waters, one of his bright young staff captains, had found a skiff hidden in some rushes. Using the skiff, he brought back four large barges from the opposite bank of the river, and Wellesley spent a nerve-racking hour watching the barges ferrying the Buffs across in relays. When the French woke up to their danger, the Buffs had already seized the large building and made it ready for defence. Three hours of French counter-attacks achieved nothing but heavy losses, so Soult called in his troops guarding the Douro quaysides. That left it open for the local Portuguese to take their boats across to Wellesley's side of the river and ship over large British reinforcements. Soult gave up and ordered a retreat, but his army was already running.

We now move on three years, and Wellesley has become the Marquis of Wellington, and has invaded French-held Spain with an army of 48,000 men and 54 guns. He and the French commander, Marshal Marmont, are trying to outmanoeuvre each other on a dusty stretch of country round Salamanca. Marmont, who had been retiring, suddenly began to advance, and Wellington fell back, even sending off his baggage train to the rear. Marmont saw the dust cloud, and reckoned he had the chance to march round Wellington and cut off his retreat. Wellington watched the French on their march round his right, saw gaps begin to open between their infantry divisions in column of route; judged the right moment exactly to order the British attack, and three British divisions and the cavalry took the over-extended French in the flank and routed them. Five French divisions literally broke up and ran. Marmont lost 21,000 men in killed, wounded and prisoners.

Here, then, is a supreme example of cool-headed timing, achievement of complete surprise on the battlefield, and then initiative on the part of the C-in-C and his subordinate commanders in exploiting an enemy false move to the utmost.

The two world wars are full of examples of victory, or battlefield success, going to the side which thinks quickest and moves quickest. Take Rommel, for example. As commander of 7th Panzer Division in 1940, he found himself temporarily blocked at the Meuse crossings near Dinant because of blown bridges. But he himself by personal reconceing found a weir with a foot-bridge over it, and led his infantry across it to seize the essential bridgehead. Later in the Desert, his entire campaign, all his battles, were based on pitting the qualities of surprise and the unexpected, coupled with bold tactical initiative, against a numerically superior but clumsy and slow-thinking enemy.

General O'Connor

I would like to conclude with two British examples—General Sir Richard O'Connor and his victory over the Italians in 1940-1941, and Bill Slim in central Burma in 1945.

O'Connor commanded Western Desert Force, later XIII Corps, with a strength of some 30,000 men. The Italians had invaded Egypt and ensconced themselves in a line of fortified camps south from Sidi Barrani. O'Connor was heavily outnumbered overall and by two to one in artillery. No one then knew how well a Fascist Italian army would fight. O'Connor's trump cards were the 57 infantry tanks of 7th Royal Tanks, and 7th Armoured Division, equipped with Cruisers, for exploitation. Now, it is easy to imagine a deliberate frontal solution for attacking this line of camps.

Indeed, an early exercise held by an infantry division was just that—pre-registration of artillery, a preliminary bombardment, then a combined infantry and tank assault à la 1918—a pre-war Camberley solution. O'Connor's answer was absolutely unorthodox, and was founded on the factors of surprise and initiative. He would pass his assault force—the "I" tanks and 4th Indian Division—through the gap between Nibeiwa and Sofafi camps on the night before the battle; then attack the Italian line of camps from the rear, starting with Nibeiwa. So much for strategic surprise. With regard to tactical surprise, there would be no registration of artillery, no preliminary bombardment. Instead, the artillery would open sudden fire from the west, or Italian rear, on the whole Nibeiwa camp area, with the intention of causing panic and confusion rather than destruction of targets. The infantry would follow the tanks still in their trucks and dismount only at the last moment for the assault. This combined attack, again coming from the direction of the Italian rear, would hit the north-west corner of the Nibeiwa perimeter, where air reconnaissance had revealed that all vehicle tracks led into the camp, suggesting an absence of mines. Thereafter the whole Italian line of camps was to be rolled up in detail.

Except for some inevitable minor hiccups, O'Connor's plan was brilliantly successful. After three days he had ended the Italian threat to Egypt, smashed two Italian corps, taken 38,000 prisoners, 73 tanks and 237 guns—all for the total of 600 killed, wounded, and missing.

Of course, we know that Western Desert Force was an incomparably better performer than the Italian Tenth Army. But it was O'Connor's

plan and his leadership that exploited that superiority to the utmost. Without surprise and initiative, it could have turned out just an "ordinary" push.

Remember, too, O'Connor's incredible initiative by which he took the worn-out vehicles of 7th Armoured across unreconnoitred tracks to cut off the Italian retreat from Benghazi at Beda Fomm. For the Italians, this was a total surprise and total destruction.

Slim in Burma

My last case-study is Bill Slim and the Battle of Meiktila-Mandalay in Burma in early 1945. Slim's invasion of Burma from Assam right through the monsoon had followed his crushing defeat of the Japanese Army's own offensive at Imphal and Kohima. In other words, he was exploiting what Clausewitz would have called the reaction after the Japanese passed the culminating point of their success. Slim and his air commanders achieved logistic surprise by nourishing the 14th Army's advance by an unprecedented use of air supply. His engineers made this possible by the speed and ingenuity with which they built forward airfields. They were pretty good at roads and bridges, too. Another example of logistic initiative was the fabrication out of local timber of huge rafts to ferry tanks and transport over the River Chindwin.

With a firm bridgehead over the Chindwin, Slim was ready for the big operation—smashing the powerful Japanese army defending central Burma. His initial plan was to fight a decisive battle in the open plain north of the Irrawaddy; this was where his air power and armoured forces would tell against the Japanese, who were weak in both those arms. Slim was quite sure that the enemy would oblige him by fighting there. As he writes in his book *Defeat Into Victory*:

I relied on my knowledge of the Japanese and of the mentality of their high command as I had known it . . . I thought he would never dare to lose face by giving up territory without a struggle.¹¹

In this, as he admits, Slim proved completely mistaken. The Japanese, now under a new commander, Kimura, withdrew behind the mile-wide Irrawaddy. Slim had to think again. And his new plan can, I think, be called a strategic masterpiece. He would first cross the Irrawaddy north of Mandalay and lock the Japanese in battle, thus convincing them that this was his main

thrust. Meanwhile, his IV Corps would secretly march southwards, cross the Irrawaddy where least expected by the Japanese, and then strike east towards Meiktila, deep in the enemy's rear, and a nodal point in his communications. It looks simple and splendid as just arrows on the map, but the administrative problems and the sheer risks were enormous. The march to the crossing point had to be kept secret; it involved moving along 300 miles of abominable track. Slim had none of the specialised equipment for assault river crossings available in Europe. We get a glimpse of the stress produced on a commander by the hazards involved in any bold stroke of initiative. Slim's air colleague, Air Marshal Vincent, remembered that "It was the only time he got a little on edge."

His ADC recalled that one day Slim caught two officers having lunch before their soldiers had been fed. The ADC said that for once "Slim lost his temper; he was cold and terrifying." And Slim himself later revealed his own concealed, private feelings at this time, while he was mounting his strategic surprise on the Japanese:

... sometimes doubt and fear slunk in upon me. I was asking so much of them (his troops)—was it too much? Success depended on what? Luck? A Japanese pilot streaking the tree-tops, an enemy agent with a wireless set crouched above the truck counting tanks—and Kimura's divisions would move, the muzzles of his guns swing towards our crossing places. Imagination is a necessity for a general, providing it is a *controlled* imagination. At times I regained control of mine only by an effort of will, of concentration on the job in hand. And then I walked once more among my soldiers, and I, who should have inspired them, not for the first or the last time, drew courage from them.¹⁴

But he achieved his total surprise. On 14 February 1945, his forces got across the Irrawaddy at Pagan against only light opposition. His armour struck across open country to Meiktila and captured it four days later. Now came frenzied Japanese counter-attacks as they tried to recapture the town, the key to their entire position in central Burma. And Slim was there on the spot at his divisional commander's side. Reading his account of the battle, with British and Japanese units dog-

fighting at close quarters, it can be seen how much then depended on Slim's subordinates at every level, on their enterprise and quick-wittedness, and indeed on the military skills of his British and Indian soldiers. Thanks to them, the Japanese counter-attacks failed with heavy loss, and the entire Japanese defence of central Burma collapsed. This, in my view, was the cleverest, boldest, and most brilliant single British victory in World War II.

What then is the final lesson of these historical case-studies? It is that, given a high standard of leadership and training, an army, or a unit in an army, which makes maximum use of surprise and initiative can prevail over superior numbers or adverse battle conditions. It is that even an army on the defensive is not some kind of tethered goat, but rather a hunter waiting in ambush to pounce on an unwary victim.

NOTES

1. Arthur Behrend, *As From Kemmel Hill* (London 1963), p. 53.
2. British Official History *Military Operations France and Belgium 1918: The German March Offensive and its Preliminaries* (London 1935), pp. 156-157.
3. Captain Desmond Young, Signal Book, 42nd Infantry Brigade.
4. British Official History *France and Belgium 1918: March-April: Continuation of The German Offensive* (London 1937), p. 27.
5. C. von Clausewitz (translated by Col. J. J. Graham) (London 1940), Vol. I, p. 199.
6. *Ibid.*
7. *Op. cit.*, Vol. II, p. 134.
8. *Vol. cit.*, pp. 154-155.
9. *Op. cit.*, Vol. III, p. 9.
10. *Ibid.*
11. John J. Pullen, *The Twentieth Maine: A Volunteer Regiment in the Civil War* (London 1959), p. 128.
12. British Official History *Military Operations France and Belgium 1914: Antwerp, La Bassée, Armentières, Messines and Ypres October-November 1914* (London 1925), p. 304.
13. W. Slim *Defeat Into Victory* (London, Cassell, 1956).
14. *Op. cit.*

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COMMENTARY & REPLY

To the Editor:

I've just finished reading "Western Security and the Military Potential of the PRC," by Dr. A. James Gregor (*Parameters*, Spring 1984). It is quite clearly erudite, scholarly, and wrong. Somehow it reminds me of the apocryphal story of the bumblebee. You remember—supposedly, after extensive research aerodynamic engineers proved that the bumblebee is incapable of flight. However, the bumblebee, which had not read the study, continued to fly.

In his article, Dr. Gregor paints the picture of a military force within China that is growing in capability and sophistication, yet somehow remains a politico-military basketcase in its ability to counter Soviet power or meaningfully to influence events. Initially the article asks, "To what degree might the sale of weapons systems to the . . . PRC alter the current military balance, to the advantage of mainland China and the collateral advantage of the anti-Soviet Western powers?" The conclusion is that "whatever benefits the relations between the United States and the PRC might deliver, direct strategic and military payoffs are not among them." That is, the bumblebee is incapable of flight.

One must hope that the logic of this position doesn't leak out to China. After all, the present capabilities of the Chinese military are sufficient to tie down about 60 percent of the Vietnamese forces, keeping them stationed near the China border rather than wandering around doing mischief in other parts of Southeast Asia. One can't deny that Chinese forces are an important part of the strategic thinking in that area. Similarly, 95 percent of the Soviet forces in the Far East are based along the Chinese border. Does this indicate that the Soviets don't see the Chinese forces as a worrisome potential threat? Would we rather see these Soviet forces somewhere else, such as in NATO's backyard? We can't be so naive as to think that Chinese forces don't complicate the Soviets' strategic outlook, and that further strengthening of the Chinese military capabilities will not further diminish the Soviets' ability to prosecute successfully a two-front war. Finally, it appears that the same methodology could have been used 33 years ago to "prove" that Chinese forces could never play a meaningful role during

the Korean War. After all, the country was just recovering from a world war and a civil war, with antiquated forces. They may have been no match for the United Nations troops—but we all know what happened at the Yalu.

Several things bothered me about the article itself. The first was the heavy use of the book *The Chinese War Machine* as a primary reference for Chinese military capabilities. In my view, that book, which was published at a time when not too much was known about the Chinese military, is not now an authoritative reference. Similarly, the *Air University Review* article cited in note 22, which drew heavily from the same reference, is not a balanced statement of Chinese military capabilities. Too much reliance on these references as authoritative statements of Chinese capabilities is a dangerous and potentially misleading move. Second, it is curious at a time in history when there is a rapidly growing private enterprise sector within China that the author should find it necessary so often to prefix "China" with the word "communist," especially since he never once refers to the "communist Soviet Union." Factually, although China continues to parade behind the banners of socialism, behind the scenes there is a massive economic change in progress, with a growth in private enterprise that is only partially concealed from view. So why insist on the frequent use of the "communist" label as an emotional pejorative? Third, the author avoids the use of the modern Pinyin romanization of Chinese terms, using instead a more archaic form used nowhere in China except in Taiwan. Some may feel that the article, as well as the language, has a hidden pro-Taiwan bias which goes beyond the facts in this case.

Most knowledgeable military observers will corroborate the need in China for improved air defenses and anti-tank capabilities. (China is moving to ameliorate those and other problems related to equipment, personnel, and strategy, within the constraints of the country's overall financial resources.) However, it is disingenuous to use the existing shortcomings of the Chinese military as a rationale to deny the possible benefits of closer liaison between the United States and the PRC. Such a denial could, in the longer term, be a self-fulfilling prophecy, losing for us the leverage which results from a closer working relationship

with the PRC. Properly developed, that relationship is clearly in the best national security interests of both the United States and the PRC.

I would commend an article by Phan Quang Dan in the May issue of *Pacific Defense Reporter*, titled "China as a Barrier to the Soviet Expansion." That author concludes that "under present circumstances, China's strong stand against Soviet expansionism represents the best safeguard for the independence and sovereignty of non-communist South-East Asia, and also a major factor for maintaining world stability and equilibrium." He then adds a cautionary note, warning that China will have to prove its interest in genuine cooperation and will have to assuage the fears of some that Russian expansionism and hegemonism might be replaced by a Chinese brand of the same product.

Like the aerodynamicists, Dr. Gregor has studied the problem, and found that it won't fly. But, obstinately, things aren't working out as the theory says they should:

- Chinese military capabilities *are already* a major factor complicating Soviet strategic planning.

- Chinese strategic forces *do* provide a deterrent to Soviet forces.

- China's activity on its southern border *is* a constraint to uninhibited Vietnamese action in Southeast Asia—an example of Chinese action which works toward goals similar to those of US policy.

- China *does* act as a moderating influence on North Korea and on Soviet influence on the Korean peninsula.

Finally, if all this is true, it's hard to see how selective improvement of the Chinese military forces can fail to further advance US interests, or how treating China as a friendly but nonaligned power can work to our disadvantage. There *are* strategic and military payoffs to our improving relationship with China. In this case, it's the article, not the bumblebee, which doesn't fly.

COL James M. Reed, USAF
Honolulu, Hawaii

The Author Replies:

I can only lament that my brief exposition left Colonel Reed confused. Nowhere in the article did I suggest that Sino-Soviet hostility had not created problems for Soviet strategic planning, nor did I suggest that nuclear weapons, no matter how

primitive, did not serve as a deterrent of sorts. Furthermore, I am perfectly willing to grant that Beijing's military deployments on the Sino-Vietnamese border have acted as a "constraint" on Hanoi's freedom of action. Finally, it is probably true that Beijing is exercising a moderating influence on Pyongyang. Colonel Reed seems to suggest (1) I did not know all that, and (2) that what he has revealed is self-evidently an unmixed blessing.

He might want to consider that the Sino-Vietnamese dispute has driven Hanoi firmly into the embrace of the Soviets—and, as a consequence, Soviet naval combatants and combat aircraft now have use-as-needed access to facilities in Indochina and very much complicate US strategic planning. He might want to consider that Beijing's deterrent military capabilities did not deter the Soviet Union from moving aggressively on the very border of the PRC to invade and occupy Afghanistan—as aggressive a military adventure as any undertaken by Moscow.

But none of this has anything to do with the substance of my article. The point of the article was to assess the merits of moving "beyond the implicit counterweight strategy with the People's Republic of China toward a more active collaboration," particularly in terms of the "sale of weapons and weapon-related technology." The question addressed was to "what degree might the sale of weapon systems . . . alter the current military balance along the Sino-Soviet border to the advantage of mainland China and the collateral advantage of the anti-Soviet Western powers" (p. 35).

Whatever the real or fancied benefits the United States has derived from the Sino-Soviet dispute, they were available even before Washington decided to normalize diplomatic relations with Beijing. My question was whether US arms sales would provide any further advantages to those that already have been made available. My answer was no, and nothing Colonel Reed has said addresses that issue.

Even if it should be decided that a better-armed communist China might serve US interests, Colonel Reed is familiar with the assessments of the economic costs entailed. Colonel Reed is also aware of the prevailing expert judgment aptly summarized by Strobe Talbott:

China is extremely backward militarily. Nothing that either China or the U.S. can do will bring about any time soon the technological modernization of the People's

Liberation Army Even if China could afford massive amounts of American or Western European armaments—which it definitely cannot—the infusion would not do much good in redressing the Sino-Soviet balance in modern weaponry and firepower. [Strobe Talbott, "The Strategic Dimension of the Sino-American Relationship: Enemy of our Enemy or True Friend?" in Richard H. Solomon, ed., *The China Factor: Sino-American Relations and the Global Scene.*]

In effect, the US sale of arms and arms-related technology to the PRC might conceivably serve political and diplomatic purposes—but it will do nothing to change the military equation in East Asia to the enhancement of Western security. That was the point of my effort. I am sorry that I confused Colonel Reed. I am pleased that he found my account "erudite" and "scholarly." That he found my account "wrong" was a consequence of the fact that he thought I was answering another question—one I had not addressed.

The fact is that the Sino-Soviet dispute is so well entrenched, and so firmly rooted in long-standing issues that it will not be resolved for the foreseeable future. Whatever security advantages the Western powers now enjoy because of that dispute will be forthcoming whatever the relations between Washington and Beijing and whether or not the United States sells arms to communist China. Prudence alone will require that the Soviet Union maintain a multipurpose force, at its present approximate strength, along the border of the PRC to ensure mainland China's neutrality in any encounter with the West, and to counter any Western initiatives in the West Pacific. There is no argument that I know of that would lead one to expect a drawdown of Soviet forces from the Sino-Soviet border—irrespective of what the relations between Washington and Beijing might be (see my article, "The People's Republic of China as a Western Security Asset," *Air University Review*, July-August 1983).

The ultimate issue—a question not addressed in my article—is: given the reality that US arms sales to Beijing will do little or nothing to alter the military balance along the Sino-Soviet border, why undertake them? Would the marginal improvement in the PLA's capabilities afforded by Western arms sales to Beijing serve the security interests of the anti-Soviet coalition? Or would such sales generate diplomatic, political, and perhaps strategic problems that might be

detrimental to those interests? Would the non-communist littoral and insular neighbors of the PRC welcome a direct US involvement in the modernization of communist Chinese armed forces?

None of this was considered in my article. But these questions do suggest themselves. Nothing Colonel Reed has said contributes to the consideration of any of these serious issues.

The remainder of Colonel Reed's communication deals with issues that are not at all serious. It is not clear to me what he means by complaining that I have made "heavy use" of the volume, *The Chinese War Machine*. If he reviews my notes (see n. 3 on p. 48), I think he will find ready references to most of the major public materials available on the state of the PRC military. The real question turns not on what particular sources I employed, but whether any of my facts were in error.

The use of the qualifier "communist" agitates Colonel Reed. That I refer to the "communist" Chinese government without similarly referring to the "communist" Soviets seems to disturb him. But the fact remains that there is only one Soviet Union—and that Soviet Union is communist. The qualifier is hardly necessary. On the other hand, there are two viable Chinese political systems. One is "nationalist," and the other is "communist." Like North Korea and South Korea, West Germany and East Germany, there is a communist China and a nationalist China—and it is at least doubtful whether word magic can change that.

But Colonel Reed seems to wish to go beyond rectification of names. He seems to believe that the current experiments in the "marketization" of the communist Chinese economy make the PRC something less than communist. That will come as a surprise to the authorities in Beijing.

Actually, the current economic reforms in the PRC resemble the reforms of Lenin's New Economic Policy—an effort to restore productivity to those sectors of the economy that had been almost fatally impaired by "leftist" excesses. Lenin's NEP did not signal a system change in the Soviet Union—nor is it likely that the marginal reforms in the PRC will produce a "free enterprise" economy (see the instructive article by Jan S. Prybyla, "The Economic System of the People's Republic of China," in *Asian Thought and Society*, March 1984).

Finally, that I have sometimes used the Wade-Giles system of romanization of Chinese names seems to reveal some murky political

purpose to Colonel Reed. Actually, there really is nothing sinister involved. I use "Beijing" (which is, after all, a Pinyin romanization) because it has become increasingly familiar. I used "Sinkiang" (Wade-Giles) rather than "Xinjiang" (Pinyin) simply because I imagined (rightly or wrongly) that most readers still find "Xinjiang" exotic and might not immediately identify it with communist China's northwest autonomous region. It is not at all clear to me how all this suggests a "pro-Taiwan bias," and further what that might have to do with the intrinsic merits of my case.

I suspect that Colonel Reed, like so many others, would like to see the People's Republic of

China as something other than what it is. It was not so long ago that my colleagues were writing books about how the United States might learn to solve its urban, environmental, and human management problems by following the example of communist China. In this sometimes bitter world, we all indulge in flights of fancy. We all wish that the PRC might relieve us of our burden of dealing with the Soviet Union, but if wishes were horses, beggars would ride.

Dr. A. James Gregor
University of California, Berkeley



BOOK REVIEWS

RED ARMOUR: An Examination of the Soviet Mobile Force Concept. By Richard Simpkin. 253 pages. Brassey's Defence Publisher Ltd., London, 1984. \$36.00.

"I have sought to push out . . . with a skeleton of fact decked with hypotheses. These, I hope, are at once controversial enough to provoke attack and sound enough to withstand it." So Richard Simpkin outlines his goal in *Red Armour*. He has indeed succeeded. *Red Armour* is a fascinating series of contemporary essays which take the reader into the depths of Soviet thinking about land warfare. The author examines Soviet mobile force operations in three categories: resources, procedures, and concepts. The fundamental concept is "to nullify the enemy's ability and will to fight." Resources are divided into firepower, mobility support, C³, and logistics. Procedures are the focus of Simpkin's examination, and they provide the highly interesting "skeleton" upon which the theory is hung.

In approaching such an analysis, the author could have followed one of two broad paths. He could assume a generalized doctrinal model for operations, then deduce specific procedures based upon the model and buttressed by evidence from Soviet literature, exercises, etc. Alternatively (and this is what Simpkin chose to do), one could assemble the evidence from specific Soviet wargames, exercises, writings, and lectures, and based upon these samples, derive a generalized model. The model then provides the framework upon which to predict Soviet actions should the real battles occur.

Using his ability to read German and Russian, and drawing heavily upon the Soviet "apostle of mobility" Babadzhanian, and the turning operation concept expounded by Tukachevskii, the author has done a superb job of creating a readable, thoughtful, exciting concept of Soviet mobile warfare. Phrases like "the prophets of position" (referring to those who espouse a position defense) and "helicopter is to tank, as tank is to boot" bring the reader carefully along a tough but interesting road to understand the notion of momentum and the concept of main force, maneuver force, opposing force.

Richard Simpkin has authored several excellent works. He has the ability to go directly to original source material. Most of all, he can put the pieces together to create a whole mosaic which makes the reader think. You won't agree with all you read in this book, but it is certain that you will enjoy its easy reading and clear logic. No serious student of military matters at the operational and strategic levels should fail to read *Red Armour*, and then decide whether or not to respond to Simpkin's introduction.

GEN Glenn K. Otis
Commander in Chief
US Army Europe and Seventh Army

THE PUSAN PERIMETER. By Edwin P. Hoyt. 296 pages. Stein & Day, New York, 1984. \$19.95.

The beginning of the history, *The Second United States Infantry Division in Korea 1950-1951*, is called to mind: "For those who know all or part of this story first-hand it may serve as a reminder of a dirty experience which had few equals in the past, and God willing, none in the future."

In *The Pusan Perimeter* Edwin Hoyt narrates the dismal events and the desperate retrograde actions of the UN Forces during the first three months of the Korean War. He begins with the North Korean attack on Sunday, 25 June 1950, that caught the puny Republic of Korea forces flat-footed—as it did the US Far East Command and the civilian administration and defense officials in Washington. Through subsequent chapters Hoyt describes the attempt at delaying actions by the inadequate ROK forces and the understrength, poorly trained, and poorly equipped US forces committed piecemeal from Japan, as they dragged themselves wearily south. Bolstered by fresh and better-quality units from the United States, the allies slowed the North Korean advance and finally halted it on the Pusan Perimeter, only 50 miles from the sea.

Hoyt puts the blame for this debacle squarely on the politicians and on the lack of will exhibited by the US citizenry in its "bring the boys home" mood after World War II. He is generous, and

rightly so, in his praise of Lieutenant General Walton Walker and his 8th Army staff in skillfully plugging gaps in the sagging defensive positions with the paucity of troops at his disposal, most of whom were not combat-worthy.

The main source of Hoyt's material is Roy E. Appleman's *South to the Naktong, North to the Yalu*, published by the US Army, Office of the Chief of Military History. Others include the South Korean history of the war; the five-volume official Marine Corps history, *U.S. Marine Operations in Korea, 1950-1953*; Robert Jackson's *Air War Over Korea*; and Russell A. Gugeler's *Combat Actions in Korea*, also published by the Office of the Chief of Military History. The source citations are compiled by chapter at the end of the book, sparing the reader voluminous footnotes.

Hoyt has produced a comparatively smooth-reading volume. Transposing and condensing the material, apparently striving for brevity, have caused some errors and omissions. In general, however, the substance is there for anyone wanting to know what happened and why as the UN Forces were relentlessly driven south by a determined enemy who continuously maintained battlefield superiority.

Unfortunately, the maps and sketches necessary to an understanding of the battle actions are poorly reproduced and inadequate. Most were taken from the US Army histories and printed in black and white, while the originals depicted opposing forces in red and blue.

The closing chapter contains a political discussion based on the author's personal observations as a Far Eastern correspondent. The reader might not agree with some of Hoyt's theories and philosophies.

GEN Paul L. Freeman, USA Ret.
Carmel, Calif.

(General Freeman commanded the 23rd Infantry Regiment during the United Nations defensive campaign of 1950.)

CONVENTIONAL DETERRENCE. By John J. Mearsheimer. 296 pages. Cornell University Press, Ithaca and London, 1983. \$29.50.

This book is about an important subject: the influence of conventional force capabilities on political decisions to go to war or not. Deterrence means "persuading an opponent not to initiate a specific action because the perceived benefits do

not justify the estimated costs and risks." It is "most likely to obtain when an attacker believes his probability of success is low and that the attendant costs will be high."

The author identifies two concepts of conventional deterrence: one considers the type of weapons, offensive and defensive, possessed by either side; another considers the balance of forces between two sides. Accepting neither of these, Mearsheimer argues that deterrence is a "direct function of specific military strategies," a notion that embraces both balance of forces and types of weapons. He asserts that three basic strategies are available: attrition, blitzkrieg, and limited aims. An attacker can pursue an unlimited war, seeking defeat of opposing forces, using either blitzkrieg or attrition strategy; the latter simply wears down the defender; the former strikes deep, achieving victory at low cost. Deterrence is likely to break down when a would-be attacker believes he can mount a successful blitzkrieg, avoiding costly set piece attrition battles.

Blitzkrieg strategy depends on fast-moving armored forces; its ultimate success comes about from paralysis of the defense. When blitzkrieg fails, it gives way to attrition warfare. Attrition strategy diffuses armor, using it, with artillery, essentially as a firepower adjunct to infantry attack, seeking simply to overwhelm and wear down the enemy with numbers. Limited-aims strategy seeks to grab territory from the defender, doing so by surprise. Having secured his goal the attacker goes over to the defensive, seeking to avail himself of the battlefield advantages which nominally accrue to the defense. The victim is confronted by the unattractive alternative of attrition-style war to regain his turf.

Defense options are categorized as: static—linear defense with forces lacking in tactical mobility; forward—linear with forward-deployed forces having significant tactical mobility; and mobile—limited forces forward with large armored counterattack forces deep in the defensive system. Mobile defense is best against limited-aims attacks.

Why not blitzkrieg or attrition for limited aims? Blitzkrieg aims at destruction of enemy forces and decisive victory; an attacker with limited aims would be unlikely to use a strategy designed to achieve decisive goals. Attrition aims at wearing down an enemy force; since limited aims seeks only to seize ground, attrition is an unlikely strategic bedfellow.

The author presents 12 cases in which he matches deterrence successes against deterrence

failures, attempting to determine why, in some circumstances, war broke out, and in others it did not. One chapter is devoted to the British-French decision not to attack after declaring war on Germany in 1939; another chapter examines the German decision to attack the Allies in May 1940; yet another treats all Arab-Israeli wars.

The allies were deterred from taking military action to support Poland in September 1939 because they foresaw a war of attrition, one in which the defender would enjoy a tremendous advantage over the attacker, and one which could only be won with superior resources—which they did not reckon they possessed. The prospect of engaging in a war of attrition was a powerful deterrent.

In 1939, despite Hitler's desire to attack west, weather and the determined opposition of his general officers produced a conviction that a war of attrition would ensue; deterrence prevailed. However, the *Wehrmacht* attacked west in 1940; Germany was not deterred from that course. Why not? The German leadership had convinced itself that a blitzkrieg to the west was possible; the likelihood of blitzkrieg turning to a war of attrition was not significant. Spurred on by their dramatic success in France in 1940 and convinced that the blitzkrieg would succeed, the Germans were undeterred from attacking the Soviet Union in what would develop into the most tragically costly war of attrition.

Israel's leaders in the years following the War of Independence (1948) concluded that the only way for Israel to defend itself against its numerically superior and hostile Arab neighbors was to embrace a general defense strategy executed offensively—a classic offensive defense. Critical to the success of that strategy was blitzkrieg employing highly mobile armored forces. Because they were convinced in 1956 that the Israeli Defense Force could win quickly with blitzkrieg, David Ben-Gurion, strongly urged on by Moshe Dayan and Shimon Peres, ordered the IDF into action against the Egyptians.

Although the Nasser-invoked crisis which led to war in 1967 took the Israelis by surprise, they opted for war again, and under Moshe Dayan launched a blitzkrieg, undeterred because of the overriding conviction that such a course would bring them quick success at affordable costs.

In 1973 the Egyptian plan called for crossing the Suez Canal, seizing a strip of territory in the Sinai and there organizing a defense the Israelis would not risk attacking. This limited-aim strategy rested on two assumptions, that the

Israelis would not risk an attack against such a strong defense, and that the superpowers would intervene before the IDF could mobilize and ready an attack.

Contemplating "Prospects for Conventional Deterrence in Central Europe," the author concludes that the preferred Soviet strategy would have to be blitzkrieg. However, because the task of overrunning NATO's defenses would be formidable, and would likely develop quickly into an attrition war, Mearsheimer concludes that while NATO does not have the capability to win a conventional war against Pact forces in Central Europe, NATO's strength is sufficient to deny the Pact a quick victory.

The penultimate chapter examines the effect of precision guided munitions on conventional warfare, concluding that while PGM have not radically changed the conventional battlefield, they do buttress limited-aims strategy due to their capability against armored forces seeking to defeat an entrenched defense following a successful limited-aims attack.

The central theme of the book is that deterrence is likely to fail when one side believes a blitzkrieg can succeed without turning into a war of attrition. Deterrence is likely to be effective when an attacker perceives that attrition is likely to be in the offing. Limited-aims strategy is a realistic alternative for an attacker when it appears that a limited attack will not turn into a protracted conflict.

This book is an outcome of work done in pursuit of a doctoral degree. Like many such endeavors it has some sophomoric moments. Minutia aside, there are several important discontinuities.

Warfare today is a complex matter of political military interactions at several levels—tactical, operational, strategic. While much of this book deals with tactical and operational-level matters, both are frequently cast as if they were strategic matters.

Consideration of Soviet military doctrine must inevitably contend with the Soviet operational concepts of mass, momentum, and continuous land combat; with how to cope with echelon after echelon of follow-on forces seeking to overwhelm the defender with numbers; with how to defeat the operational maneuver groups which are once again an important part of the Soviet capability; and with doing all that potentially in conventional and in chemical or nuclear environments. The US Army's operational-level perception of how to cope with

Soviet operational concepts is called *AirLand Battle*; it is set forth in the 1982 edition of FM 100-5. The author's perception of US and NATO doctrine ends with the 1976 edition of that same manual, which featured the active defense but which did not treat the broader operational-level matters embraced by the later edition. This book generally ignores Soviet-style operational-level concepts.

No analysis of force balance in Central Europe today is relevant without considering the linkage between theater nuclear forces (TNF) and conventional forces—an operational-level matter. For of all the considerable increases in Soviet capabilities over the past several years, none is so difficult to cope with as the growing conventional capability of Pact forces. This book ignores the TNF-conventional force linkage.

The limited-aims strategy set forth as an alternative to blitzkrieg or attrition has serious shortcomings. In 1940 the Germans sought to split the Allied armies, and thereby to defeat the Alliance in detail—a classic operational-level concept. That there was an associated terrain objective does not argue that grabbing a piece of ground is a suitable military aim, unless that ground has some tactical or operational significance. If it does, it's quite likely to be heavily defended at the outset, or at least the object of whatever military action it takes to reckon with its possession by an attacker. The idea that a limited-aims attacker can get away with his caper is belied by the history of warfare—even in the cited cases.

In too many cases, there is a lack of depth in understanding very basic concepts. For example, the *Wehrmacht* attack into Poland was not a blitzkrieg, but the North Korean attack south in 1950 was—with both notions many would not agree. Generic defensive strategies include the forward defense—a theater-level matter, not a generalized defensive concept. Presumably the 1976 edition of FM 100-5 is the source of the forward defense notion. However the critical argument of that writing is not forward defense, but active defense—forward or not. Active defense by forward-deployed forces could be one element of a mobile defense, of a defense in depth, of an offensive defense. It is a key element of *AirLand Battle* as set forth in the 1982 edition of FM 100-5, and adopted in principle by NATO at the operational level of warfare in the NATO Follow-on Force Attack concept.

Surprise is integral to limited-aims attack but is not a part of blitzkrieg; in historical fact,

operational-level surprise is fundamental to successful blitzkrieg. There is also a faulted allusion to the German concept of *Auftragstaktik*. Flawed though it may be, this is an important attempt to develop concepts regarding a very important matter. For as the nuclear balance levels at near parity, as the Soviets continue on their impressive conventional force modernization, a great deal of informed intellectual investigation of the matter of conventional deterrence is a worthwhile, indeed an essential undertaking. That first attempts do not meet the mark is not to deny their value as a first step in a most crucial direction.

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LITERATURE IN THE EDUCATION OF THE MILITARY PROFESSIONAL. Edited by Donald Ahern and Robert Shenk. 107 pages. US Air Force Academy, Colorado Springs, Colo., 1982. Limited edition, available upon request.

This little paperback comprises a welcome package indeed. The literature of the military professional is, of course, replete with books and articles telling him why he ought to read military history. But prior to the appearance of this work compiled by Messrs. Ahern and Shenk, no book or major study has to my knowledge appeared which purports to set before the military professional in full scope the advantages of reading belletristic literature.

Belletristic writing—or belles lettres—is literature considered as one of the fine arts, that is, fiction, poetry, drama, etc., in contrast to purely functional discourse. Its distinguishing features are the capacity to delight (aesthetic effect) and to inform (didactic effect). In the authors' shorthand, the term "literature" is used to stand for belletristic writing in general, and it is important to note that the particular literature they commend need not be devoted expressly to military characters or themes, though it may.

The book is an anthology, with a foreword by Vice Admiral James Bond Stockdale, US Navy, retired, and former Vietnam POW; nine chapters, each written by a former or present member of the Department of English, US Air Force Academy; and an afterword consisting of a brief annotated bibliography on humanities and the military. Among the better chapters are those by Alfred Kern, who presents a lively argument that a

humanities education is the officer's best safeguard against the psychological and moral rigors of war; Jim Gaston, who observes that while science deals with means, literature deals with ends, and both are essential in preparing the military professional; and Joseph F. Tusso, whose thesis is that while the intellectual domain must obviously be developed in the military leader, his emotional, volitional, and moral faculties must likewise be well developed, and this task is especially suited to the agency of literature.

As in most pioneering studies, the book has its liabilities. The text is in need of editing and proofreading. There is too much commonality among the literary works discussed. Quality among the nine chapters is uneven. And there is an unnecessary tendency to overstate literature's case. But these are forgivable faults that can be corrected in future editions and in related studies inspired by this exemplar. The overall impression remaining is positive. We can be glad that combat-experienced military men have finally taken the time to set down in convincing fashion their conviction that imaginative literature has an essential role to play in the education of our military leaders.

COL Lloyd J. Matthews, USA Ret.
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THE RUSSIANS AND REAGAN. By Strobe Talbott. 140 pages. Vintage Books, New York, 1984. \$4.95.

This concise analysis of Soviet-American relations deals with Soviet perceptions of the Reagan Administration. It is based largely on the author's encounters over the last three years with journalists, party officials, diplomats, and *institutchiki* (experts attached to the foreign policy institutes in Moscow), "whom the Soviet regime has authorized to serve as professional purveyors of Soviet perceptions of the United States."

Mr. Talbott, diplomatic correspondent of *Time*, writes that there are two features of the Reagan Administration policy toward the USSR that seemed to upset the Soviets the most. One is what might be called the "hardware" of that policy, the Administration's apparent determination to regain military superiority. The second feature is the "software," the US determination to regain the ideological offensive against the USSR, to foment trouble among Soviet clients and within the Soviet empire, and

even to tamper with the inner workings of the Kremlin itself.

The author's argument is primarily based on Andropov's statement of 28 September 1983 (one of four appendices to the book), which denounced President Reagan's management of the super-power relationship. It is described as "the most comprehensive categorical denunciation of a U.S. administration by a top Soviet leader since the darkest, coldest days of the Cold War." Drafted with great care and the product of long sessions involving many members of the collective leadership, Andropov's statement, according to Mr. Talbott, seemed to be a formal declaration of what the Politburo wanted the world, and perhaps the Soviet people, to think was its assessment of the Reagan Administration—one which "could hardly have been bleaker, not only in its list of past grievances, but in its prognosis."

What Soviet perceptions hold for the future remains to be seen. However, Mr. Talbott contends that the Soviets cannot, "as a practical matter, unilaterally declare their dealings with the United States at an end."

This book is a timely and perceptive analysis of the complexity of Soviet-American relations. It is highly recommended for policymakers and military professionals.

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OVERLORD, D-DAY, JUNE 6, 1944. By Max Hastings. 368 pages. Simon and Schuster, New York, 1984. \$17.95.

The author of this latest account of the Normandy campaign states that his purpose is to examine some of its "unpalatable truths," principally that German soldiers, their tactical leadership, and their weapons consistently outperformed those of the Western Allies. The Allied soldier—American, British, and Canadian alike—is damned with the faint praise that he was not seriously incompetent, but merely up against a more competent and aggressive foe. Allied victory is attributed to overwhelming resources in manpower, airpower, and materiel, and to Hitler's interference.

The book's fabric is woven of selected individual and unit experiences along with a background narrative of the clash of armies that in scope and ferocity rivaled those of the Western

Front of 30 years before. The sometimes acrimonious debates within the high command are reviewed: portraits of the top commanders—including their warts—show an obvious effort at balance.

The weight given individual experiences is questionable. These always add interest to an account of war, but they also carry an inherent danger to an accurate picture: Where does an incident start and stop? What multiplier should be used in applying such a minute part to an enormous whole? The author does not avoid this danger altogether. For example, an incident describing a battalion being shot up in bivouac is concluded without the significant fact that it was back in action within 24 hours. The author also describes first-wave assault troops inert on the beach without mentioning that their weapons were fouled beyond use by sand and saltwater. His only reference to one division commander is to quote a demeaning remark that does injustice to a courageous and effective leader.

The Allies' advantage in materiel was significant by the end of the campaign, but it was marginal at the start. The author notes the tremendous losses, especially in artillery and tanks, on D-Day, but he does not relate this to the slow move inland during the first weeks. He notes the Allies' error in not training for combat in the *bocage*, but not that the Germans had occupied and trained there for four years. These factors, together with the wasteful overmanning of the Allied logistical tail, helped equalize the materiel and manpower odds. Add the superiority of the German tank, and the quality of the German soldier, and you have the conditions that turned Normandy into a bloodbath for both sides.

Given the battle as the author describes it, I cannot agree with his opinion that of the 22 American infantry and armored divisions engaged, only four were "exceptionally determined and competent." It is not credible that victory could have been won against such a foe with only this fraction of our strength of top quality.

While I do not share his near awe for the German army (nor do any of the Allied soldiers he quotes) I had, and have, the greatest respect for it. One of the values of the book is the interest it may arouse in studying that army, especially its officer and NCO selection, officer-troop relations, and training.

The book closes with a brief essay on army *ethos*—its driving force to fight, or shrink from fighting. He sees the German *ethos* in 1944 as

desperation and survival, that of the Allies as duty and conviction. Thus, the difference in the tenacity with which they fought. This does not seem an "unpalatable truth." If anything, greater fortitude is required to face the mortality of ground combat from conviction than from desperation.

An interesting parallel can be drawn with the Confederate and Federal armies in the 1864 battles from the Rapidan to the lines at Petersburg. Here it was the Confederate army which, facing overwhelming odds, fought with the fury of desperation and drew the Federal commanders' complaint that their troops lacked its spirit—much the same complaint made by the American high command in Normandy. In the end, desperate armies make splendid legends, but they win few wars. And there is the betting adage that the race may not be always to the swift, or the battle to the strong, but that is the way you lay the odds.

Obviously, I do not consider *OVERLORD* the definitive book on the Normandy campaign; perhaps no such book is possible. It presents, nonetheless, evocative and provocative insights and conclusions.

COL Charles E. Cawthon, USA Ret.
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(Colonel Cawthon commanded a company in the 116th Infantry Regiment, 29th Infantry Division, on D-Day.)

TOUCHED WITH FIRE: The Future of the Vietnam Generation. By John Wheeler. 259 pages. Franklin Watts, New York, 1984. \$16.95.

Vietnam separated us, one from another. One of the great cleavages was between those who fought and those who opposed the war. The scars are deep. In an effort at understanding and reconciliation, John Wheeler was instrumental in bringing together a symposium which produced *The Wounded Generation* (1981), edited by A. D. Horne. *Touched with Fire* is an expansion of the ideas and issues treated in the earlier volume.

Wheeler may not be a typical Vietnam veteran—son of a general, West Point, Harvard MBA, seminary, Yale Law School, special counsel to the Chairman of the SEC and to the Presidential Commission on World Hunger, Chairman of the Board of the Vietnam Veterans Memorial Fund, and Director of the Vietnam Veterans Leadership Program—yet he is representative. Much of the popular literature

depicts Vietnam veterans as angry young men scarred physically, mentally, psychologically. Many veterans struggle against an image of them as violent, drug-ridden, maladjusted, and unassimilated—time bombs planted in society. The author reminds us that the majority returned normal—tested, tempered, and strengthened to be the leaders of the rest of this decade and beyond.

As the old stereotypes are being replaced by positive, virile, successful images in the media and in larger society, and as the visceral hostilities against the conflict mute, veterans can openly show pride in their involvement. Camaraderie and bonds among Vietnam vets already exist.

Wheeler sweeps aside the protesters' claim that their decision not to go to Vietnam was the difficult, daring act of moral courage. And he avers that the decision to go was hardly a simple, knee-jerk reaction. Like their fathers and forefathers, those who answered the call responded to a masculine obligation. Wheeler continues that the erosion of such masculine obligations is part of a feminization of society which has both positive and negative attributes. Furthermore, he suggests that many who escaped service are beginning to feel a void as if they missed out on the experience of their generation, the equivalent of what World War II was for their fathers. As examples, Wheeler frequently cites the writings of James Fallows, Christopher Buckley, Michael Blumenthal, and Sam Brown.

The book is an intermingling of Wheeler's personal experiences, questions, and concerns, and a sweeping *tour de force* which expresses convictions and conclusions on a wide range of cultural and societal issues. On the personal level, the author addresses issues of concern to many. How do you relate something so central to your life as the war to those who have no frame of reference—even to parents or wife? He explains that his twin son and daughter were born with birth defects, and he contemplates the possibility that Agent Orange dioxin could have made its way into the water supply and affected even those who had no contact with the chemical.

On the larger plane, he intones on the status of women, the role of women in the healing and adjustment process for veterans and the nation as a whole, the decline of masculinity, the creativity of the present generation, generational values, and the cleavages between parts of society and even self from self. The ideas are provocative and personal. There is much to challenge, but his purpose is not to provoke but to stimulate dialogue and reconciliation. And he succeeds.

Along with such works as *The Wounded Generation*, Walter Capps' *The Unfinished War: Vietnam and the American Conscience* (1982), and Myra MacPherson's *Long Time Passing: Vietnam and the Haunted Generation* (1984), *Touched with Fire* represents a new genre of Vietnam literature, one which we will likely see more of in the coming years.

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DROP ZONE SICILY: Allied Airborne Strike July 1943. By William B. Breuer. 212 pages. Presidio Press, Novato, Calif., 1983. \$15.95.

Soldiers agree (at least as much as they agree on most matters) that a participant in a combat action has only a limited view. It can be put forth that the more complete pictures of a situation available at a military headquarters are marred by delays in reporting, difficulties in communication and evaluation, and the lack of that perceptiveness that direct participation imparts. Those who have an interest in various combat actions, and certainly the participants in the action, owe a debt of gratitude to such authors as William B. Breuer who take pains to assemble the bits and pieces of history into a coherent and interesting whole. Mr. Breuer is also the respected author of *The Bloody Clash at Sadzot: Hitler's Final Strike at Antwerp* and *They Jumped at Midnight (Salerno)*.

In *Drop Zone Sicily* the author sets his account within the context of what was happening at the time in the North Atlantic and European theaters of operations. The menacing German submarine war, Roosevelt's insouciance in proclaiming the doctrine of unconditional surrender, and the disagreement between the United States and the United Kingdom on where and when to attack German and Italian forces in Europe are recalled vividly. The reasons for the invasion of Sicily are set forth, as are the plans for the operation. The main thrust of the book is a detailed account of the activities of the elements of the US 82nd Airborne Division and the British 1st Airborne Division, which conducted the airborne landings that so facilitated the operations of the Allied seaborne forces. There is enough of the story of Allied air, sea, and army support, and of enemy air, sea, and army opposition, to put in focus the activities of the airborne forces. The author does not blink at describing the

miscarriages of training, equipment, planning, and coordination that cost the Allied forces self-inflicted casualties. In this connection, the decision to keep from the airborne forces information on the presence of two German panzer divisions on Sicily must be respected, in view of the importance of safeguarding the source of ULTRA intelligence. The decision did, however, expose the airborne forces to an added dimension of danger, and denied them the opportunity to acquire whatever additional anti-armor resources they might have found in the time they had to prepare.

Much of the flavor of the book lies in the minuteness and authenticity of the author's description of small-unit actions. Obviously only a sample of the thousands of fights in which airborne elements engaged could be included; the author made his choices well. Further flavor is given to the book by inclusion of character-revealing incidents involving all ranks. Heroic privates, such as Louis A. Hauptfleisch, and noncommissioned officers abound, as do daring junior officers. The great commanders—such as Eisenhower, Bradley, Patton, Ridgway, Taylor, Gavin, Tucker, Yarborough, Gorham—are depicted, as well as others of steel as true, but famous chiefly in the airborne world. The author does as well by the brave British rank and file, although his list of principal interviews and contacts appears to be lacking in British input.

This book is a significantly worthwhile piece of military history, and it makes what will likely be a lasting contribution.

BG Walter F. Winton, Jr., USA Ret.
Stockbridge, Mass.

(General Winton was General Matthew B. Ridgway's aide-de-camp during the Sicily campaign.)

THE BOYS IN THE BARRACKS: Observations on American Military Life. By Larry H. Ingraham. 242 pages. Institute for the Study of Human Issues, Philadelphia, Pa., 1984. \$17.50.

Pathologists seem to have learned a lesson that evades teachers of leadership and gardening: interaction of the variables in a system is learned best when the system is in a crisis or deviate state. That tenet is not reflected in most books on gardening, which typically present pictures of an ideal garden and the steps to be followed for its achievement. The problem is that when, despite

seeming adherence to those steps, the garden reverts to its natural state of weeds and insects, the gardener feels confused, powerless, and guilty. His typical reaction is to repeat the steps or abandon the garden.

Amid the Army's crisis of the early to middle 1970s, the steps in the leadership cookbooks did not seem to work. Crisis descriptors crept into Army lexicon: "juicers," "potheads," "frag-gings." Army leaders were left feeling confused, powerless, and guilty.

That crisis state was the focus of a small research team from the Walter Reed Institute of Research. The author of *The Boys in the Barracks* was the leader of that team. Their project, initially intended to be a multivariate analysis of drug use in the military, led to a seeming dead end of uninterpretable correlations. From that came the discovery of the patterns of barracks affiliation behavior which is the subject of this book.

In *Boys*, Lieutenant Colonel Larry Ingraham, psychologist and soldier, presents a unique view of 1970s soldiers in their "natural state." The picture is vivid, but not pretty. Barracks life, as lived by the young soldiers in *Boys*, is a seemingly irrational collage of carousing, drinking, cruelty, immature playing, pot smoking, and muted rebellion. It is chaos. Ingraham masterfully transforms that chaos into order by highlighting the many subtle patterns and mores that are operative in the barracks.

Despite Ingraham's insightful analysis, he takes the reader down a road that is fraught with discouragement, disillusionment, and, because of these, the temptation to reject. The target of this rejection might be Ingraham himself ("What does this Medical Corps psychologist know about soldiering?") or the characters ("Not representative." "Unbalanced—focuses only on the bad things." "Outdated—took place ten years ago.")). If those words don't cross the reader's lips, the thoughts will certainly cross his mind as Ingraham takes him on the informative, but rough, journey of *Boys*.

But at the end of that journey (page 205, precisely), Ingraham turns the reader over to his colleague, Frederick J. Manning, and things fall into place. Major Manning, also a psychologist and soldier, presents a superb critical commentary on the phenomena and analysis provided by Ingraham. He lays Ingraham's findings in the context of related insights by an impressive list of contemporary writers from the fields of psychology, sociology, and military history.

This is a rich resource for those who care about soldiers and soldiering and for those who

are genuinely interested in looking beyond soldier stereotypes to the human dynamics that are at work in the barracks. It is *must* reading for senior Army leaders.

Despite the book's clarity, relevance, and enduring value, however, I am concerned that it will not be read. My concern is based on US Army War College faculty experience. Many students did not like the ethics block, wherein we focused on My Lai, the Peers Report, and the contributing variables. Typical comments: "Why focus on failures? What about all the successes in Vietnam?" "The Army should look forward, not back." "My Lai was just an accident; it couldn't happen again." Those laments, heard year after year, convinced me that many prefer romance rather than realism in leadership studies. *Boys* may be too realistic.

COL James H. Powers
Fort Lee, Va.

THE RISE AND DEMISE OF DEMOCRATIC KAMPUCHEA. By Craig Etcheson. 284 pages. Westview Press, Boulder, Colo., 1984, \$29.50.

When my mission as US Ambassador to Cambodia was ending in 1973, a colleague mused about the reasons for the success of the Khmer Rouge, the communists who were to overthrow Lon Nol in 1975 and establish Democratic Kampuchea: "We know virtually nothing about them," he fretted. "It has been a fatal gap in our intelligence, not to know the enemy."

Craig Etcheson, drawing on articles, books, and other secondary sources that have appeared since 1976, has compiled a detailed history of Cambodia's communist movement which in good measure fills that gap. We learn that the men who dominated "classless" Democratic Kampuchea were themselves bourgeois by background, students in Paris who came under the spell of communism and returned home in the mid-1950s ready for revolution. Cambodia had become independent only in 1954. It was a tranquil, stagnant society of peasants attached to the land and Buddhism. Although he had renounced the throne, Prince Norodom Sihanouk governed like a monarch, dominating the nation without effective challenge.

It was not a country ripe for revolution, yet Saloth Sar (later Pol Pot), Khieu Samphan, Ieng Sary, and their accomplices became political activists. In his mercurial way, Sihanouk alternately tolerated and repressed them. In 1963,

many went underground, Saloth Sar to the inaccessible mountains of northeast Cambodia. Progress was slow. By 1968 the insurgency had 2000 recruits and was an irritant to Phnom Penh. But the peasants were largely indifferent to communism, and the USSR, China, and North Vietnam discounted the movement's significance and supplied no aid. North Vietnam already had satisfactory clandestine arrangements with Sihanouk to supply its forces in Vietnam.

All this changed in March 1970 when Lon Nol deposed Sihanouk. With this fateful move Lon Nol abandoned neutrality, found himself at war with North Vietnam, and appealed to President Nixon for support. The US and South Vietnamese invasion followed in May. Meanwhile, Sihanouk in Peking formed a common front with the insurgents, and China and North Vietnam began full-scale military support which continued until victory. Sihanouk, the author believes, was indispensable to the front because he induced peasants to rally to the insurgents. Another reason for success, he notes, was Lon Nol's inability to mold the contentious, often self-serving elite of Phnom Penh into an effective political and military force. The insurgents had ruthless determination, more efficient administration, and clearer goals.

The final chapters deal with the party's years in power (1975-78) and the sudden collapse of its authority when Vietnamese and disaffected Cambodians invaded in January 1979. Historians will long ponder the excesses of Pol Pot: evacuation of cities, rigid collectivization, destruction of the monarchy (Sihanouk was kept prisoner in "liberated" Phnom Penh), uprooting of Buddhism, separation of children from families, elimination of the educated class, purging of thousands of communist cadres, rejection of modern technology. Etcheson regards these as rational moves if one accepts the premise that Pol Pot was destroying the old society so as to fashion an agrarian, egalitarian state free of foreign contamination. The former rulers who still survive in jungle enclaves on the Thai border where Pol Pot commands some 30,000 soldiers have provided little insight into their actions, which toward the end resembled mindless slaughter.

Such excesses turned the people against the regime, but Etcheson considers its fatal error to have been provoking Vietnam, a war-tested nation of 50 million, to invade. More than disputed borders were involved. Was Peking, then hostile to Hanoi, urging on Pol Pot? Did Pol Pot need a new enemy to justify internal butchery? Was he

carried away by delusions of omnipotence because of his 1975 victory?

Etcheson's analysis of these still not fully comprehensible events is dispassionate. His final judgment mirrors this detachment: "In the end, the group of Khmer students from Paris were like the angels who were ejected from heaven; they promised Utopia and they were delivered unto Pandemonium." Some would be more censorious. That Pol Pot et al. are now part of a coalition including Sihanouk and Son Sann, who despise them, and which is supported by China, the United States, and a majority of UN members is one of the extraordinary ironies of current world politics. They deserve a harsher fate.

This is a work of scholarship, with meticulously cited sources, an extensive bibliography, and a useful chronology. It is not for the layman casually interested in Cambodia, but future interpreters of Cambodia's tragic decades will find this history an indispensable source and objective guide.

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AFGHANISTAN AND THE SOVIET UNION.
By Henry S. Bradsher. 324 pages. Duke University Press, Durham, N.C., 1983. \$32.50.

RED FLAG OVER AFGHANISTAN: The Communist Coup, the Soviet Invasion, and the Consequences. By Thomas T. Hammond. 252 pages. Westview Press, Boulder, Colo., 1984. \$25.00.

The Soviet invasion of Afghanistan in December 1979 was one of the most important events in the postwar era. Not only did the invasion represent the first massive use of Soviet ground forces outside the Warsaw Pact area since 1945, but the invasion also took place in a sensitive region during a period of unprecedented Soviet military strength. The invasion raised the specter of a threat to the West's oil lifeline and called into question the future of US-Soviet relations.

Scholars began to question Soviet motives for and the ramifications of the invasion, described by President Carter—with at least a dash of rhetorical flourish—as possibly "the most serious threat to peace since the Second World War." Were the Soviets aiming to threaten Iran and the

Persian Gulf? Were they marching toward a warm-water port, or was the invasion the result of more "Afghan specific" conditions, much more a defensive move than an offensive one? Was the invasion a bold strategic stroke, or was it proof positive of a considerable capacity for miscalculation on the part of the Soviets?

Pilgrims searching for well-researched answers to these questions may begin to extinguish their candles. Two recent books have thoroughly analyzed the available information and have managed to tap US government files and other less accessible sources as well.

Henry Bradsher, a Polk Award-winning journalist who previously served in Afghanistan and in the USSR, has produced the most complete and documented account of the invasion, one obviously written for a scholarly audience. After tracing the development of Soviet-Afghan relations since 1945, Bradsher concludes that the Soviet Union may have "prepared the way for a Communist coup" in April 1978 "but did not plan it in advance or trigger it." Bradsher describes in detail the virtual disintegration of governance in Afghanistan and demonstrates conclusively how the Soviets moved quickly from advice to assistance to supervision over an Afghan government hamstrung by inefficiency, factional fighting, and a growing insurgency. Bradsher is particularly effective in charting the growth in Soviet military assistance and in tracing the activities of visiting Soviet generals and other officials. He finds the invasion mainly a function of the Soviets' "ideological commitment" as well as "practical concern based on the country's location." A supporting role is seen for growing Soviet military power and doctrinal innovations in the 1970s which indicated a "changed attitude toward the role of Soviet soldiers," favoring their use to accomplish "Kremlin-defined international duties." The result, according to Bradsher, is a "quagmire," a situation where "Soviet troops who had been supposed to clear up the trouble became a major source of the trouble," turning a minor civil war into a "national war of resistance to foreign invaders and their local puppets."

Thomas Hammond, of the University of Virginia, a noted expert on communist coups, covers much of the same ground. Both authors use numerous declassified documents, and Hammond reinforces these with numerous interviews from Afghan experts and former Carter Administration officials. Hammond's style is crisp and direct and almost degenerates to "point paper" fashion in a

number of places. His style and organization suggest a more general readership target than Bradsher's.

Hammond sees the invasion as an act of "defensive aggression" designed to maintain a "cordon sanitaire" around the Soviet periphery and to enforce the Brezhnev doctrine, all in light of a potential US-Iranian conflict and Sino-American support for the Afghan freedom fighters. Although Hammond does an excellent job in reminding us of pertinent historical parallels (e.g. Mongolia), I find his explanation that the invasion was "not merely a defense of communism but also a continuation of the centuries old tradition of Russian imperialism" to be less than convincing. Moreover, his characterization of a number of border incidents and Soviet interventions in 1925, 1929, and 1930 as "invasions" is excessive and especially unwarranted since the incidents were brief and generally resolved in favor of Afghanistan and its people.

Neither of the two books details post-invasion fighting, and neither gives sufficient detail on the military ramifications of the invasion to satisfy the uniformed reader. Hammond, for example, warns the reader that the "USSR gained air bases within easy striking distance of the Strait of Hormuz," and later adds that "if Backfire bombers are stationed [at Shindand and Quadhar] they will constitute a serious threat to the American naval task force in the Indian Ocean." The former assertion is exaggerated. Flying from Shindand, the closest base, the only Soviet fighter-bomber that can reach the strait is the Su-24, none of which has been stationed in Afghanistan. The latter fact is true, but it omits an important point: Soviet Backfire bombers based in the USSR already pose a serious threat to the US Indian Ocean fleet and to the Strait of Hormuz. Much of the alleged strategic gain from bases in Afghanistan has been exaggerated, and as Bradsher and Hammond point out, whatever gains would accrue come only after Afghanistan has been pacified. In all fairness, both Hammond and Bradsher adequately cover possible political scenarios. Hammond's chapter "What Will the Soviets Do in the Future?" is a particularly good blend of current analysis and historical perspective, and a virtual roadmap to Soviet policy options concerning Afghanistan.

In summary, both books are useful additions to the growing literature on the invasion and make

significant contributions to our understanding of the origins of this five-year-old conflict.

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THE DAY AFTER WORLD WAR III: The U.S. Government's Plans for Surviving a Nuclear War.
By Edward Zuckerman. 407 pages. Viking Press, New York, 1984. \$18.95.

The cover of the March 1982 issue of *Esquire* proclaimed "If You Survive the Coming Nuclear War . . . Don't Worry. Our Leaders Have a Swell Plan." Inside, the feature article by Edward Zuckerman, "How Would the U.S. Survive a Nuclear War?" generally lived up to the billing. The tone of the article about federal plans for continuity of government and post-attack recovery was snide, and numerous details were held up for ridicule, often through inappropriate context. For example: "On the day after the outbreak of nuclear war, the president of the United States, circling high above the fallout in his fortified 747, will issue an order freezing wages, prices, and rents." These freeze orders, indeed, would be issued at some time. State and local plans assume that they have been put in effect if there are no communications. Just when signing freeze orders becomes part of the President's priorities is another matter.

Needless to say, Zuckerman's *Esquire* article was greeted with enthusiastic cries of outrage by the antinuclear movement. *The Day After World War III* grew out of that *Esquire* article. Working on a fellowship from the Alicia Patterson Foundation, Zuckerman spent three years researching his subject. He interviewed at least a hundred bona fide experts and government officials and must have read a ton of documents. (The book has an excellent section on sources, as well as a good index.) And the book itself has broken free from the supercilious approach evident in the *Esquire* article. Oh, the *Esquire* ridicule is still in the first chapter, but then Zuckerman starts laying the groundwork for chapter after chapter of calm, fair, and often friendly recitation of the government's plans and the reasoning behind them.

The odd mixture of derision and serious discussion gives reviewers problems. Thomas Powers, reviewing the book for the *Atlantic*, was

troubled by the lack of bias since his own opinion clearly was that the whole subject area was ludicrous. Jonathan Yardley, the book reviewer for *The Washington Post*, concluded that Zuckerman had changed his mind during his research when he found that the planning was careful and sensible. Said Yardley, "His initial skepticism notwithstanding, Zuckerman seems to have come to reluctant agreement with that view; to their surprise, many readers are likely to as well." Actually, it is difficult to detect in the book what Zuckerman's personal views are, and the absence of polemics or promotion makes the book unique in the politicized atmosphere of 1984.

Zuckerman is a talented writer and a master of the anecdote, which he uses to great effect to enliven what otherwise could be dull reading. About a hundred pages are devoted to a lively history of the nuclear age. For the professional reader, Zuckerman's investigation of the basis for war-fighting plans for a protracted nuclear conflict will be especially useful. Within the bounds of security, he has produced a veritable treasure of information on a subject that is little known and little understood.

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RIFT AND REVOLUTION: The Central American Imbrolio. Edited by Howard J. Wiarda. 392 pages. American Enterprise Institute, Washington, D.C., 1984. \$19.95.

IN SEARCH OF POLICY: The United States and Latin America. By Howard J. Wiarda. 144 pages. American Enterprise Institute, Washington, D.C., 1984. \$17.95.

Rift and Revolution is a first-rate effort and is almost the sole coherent work in the chaff-filled clutter that passes for scholarship on the subject. It is a long-overdue contribution to clarifying the goals and interests of the players in the Central American arena.

Beginning with the editor's "Origins of the Crisis," each successive contribution is lucid. The history of the region, the economic, political, social, and military roots of the crisis, are examined concisely and effectively. Of particular interest to military readers are chapters five, six, and seven, which analyze the roots of revolution in Central America, civil-military relations

peculiar to the region, and the guerrilla movements operating today. The latter, by Ernest Evans, should be required reading for the US military. Evans is particularly accurate in his criticism of the US military's capability to deal with revolutionary warfare:

Effective military intervention today will be more difficult. The "militarism" that was so typical of the earlier generation of guerrillas simplified the task of the US military personnel sent to various Latin American countries. Basically, all that these advisers were required to do was to improve the technical competence of the local militaries in counter guerrilla operations and, as noted previously, [they] were often quite successful in doing so. But although the US military has proved quite capable in the strictly military aspects of counter guerrilla warfare, the war in Indochina showed that the US military finds it much more difficult to respond to the sort of wars now under way in Central America—namely, the sort of revolutionary warfare in which political and military factors are equally important and are inextricably enmeshed with each other.

For both doctrinal and organizational reasons revolutionary warfare goes deeply against the grain of the US military. The doctrinal problem is that in the US military there has always been a widely shared belief that military issues are and should be kept separate from political issues. The organizational problem is that the US military is a big-unit, high-technology military. Wars against guerrillas, however, for the most part, require small units and fairly simple technology. Although the US military could, of course, modify its organizational patterns, the war in Vietnam demonstrated that the US military is extremely reluctant to modify its big-unit, high-technology organization.

The "bottom line" of the US military's problems with responding to revolutionary warfare can be summed up as follows: *Unless and until the United States makes the effort to develop a significant capability to conduct counter guerrilla warfare, increasing the US military presence beyond a fairly low level in a country combating an insurgency may well do more harm than good.* As Robert Thompson, a British expert on

guerrilla warfare, stated with respect to the American intervention in Vietnam: "The trouble with you Americans is that whenever you double the effort you somehow manage to square the error." [Emphasis added.]

Chapter eight, by Jiri and Virginia Valenta, outlines Soviet strategy and policies and examines the degree of sophistication the Soviet strategy has achieved in dealing with the diversity of the area. One of the stronger chapters is chapter 11, dealing with US security interests, by Ambassador Jeane J. Kirkpatrick. She examines the myopia of US policymakers and the disastrous swing of the late 1970s pendulum, during which we ignored both the force of communist ideology and the threat to US security posed by the Marxist-Leninists' resurgence in Central America.

Mark Falkoff's final chapter deals with the effect of Central America on US domestic politics. Aptly titled "The Apple of Discord," the chapter dissects the manipulation of US public opinion by various interest groups in support of the insurgents and the changed role of the church.

These two new variables, public affairs and the church, differentiate the present crisis from the past failed attempts of the 1960s to export the Cuban experience. What is clear is that the United States can no longer ignore the challenge, nor can we rely on unilateral intervention as we did in the past.

Rift and Revolution is a must for US policymakers who are searching for options and alternatives to Marxist takeovers. It provides not only a superb analysis of the myriad of problems plaguing Central America but provides clues to realistic policy in achieving US foreign policy goals.

Wiarda's second offering picks up with concrete recommendations for Latin American policy. *In Search of Policy* contains a devastating

critique of the failed policies of the past, describing the ethnocentrism and intellectual arrogance that contributed to those failures and the Latin American perceptions of those policies. For example, the legacy of our public stand on the Falklands/Malvinas has had long-range repercussions in Latin America--all negative. The British attaché in El Salvador told this writer, "We appreciate your aid, old chap, but you could have done the same without antagonizing your Latin American friends and jeopardizing your hemispheric interests."

Wiarda provides much useful "Dutch Uncle" advice on how to formulate policy and how *not* to antagonize our allies in the region. He examines the Monroe Doctrine, its more modern ramifications, and US interests today.

Chapter four, "Pluralism in Nicaragua?" contains the only notable weakness, with a somewhat naive or overly optimistic approach as to how to deal with Sandinistas, and the only omission is his ignoring the changed role of the church and the strength of the Sandinistas' ideology and their exportation of revolution.

Chapter seven is an autopsy of our conceptual failures and the clearest description to date of the initial assumptions that color our attitudes and policies toward the region. The final chapter provides a sharply written outline of options and how to pursue them.

This is a superb little volume on Latin America that effortlessly makes the trip from a primer to a practical "how to" handbook on long-range, sane approaches to our most pressing and confusing foreign policy problems. *In Search of Policy* is distilled wisdom and good advice.

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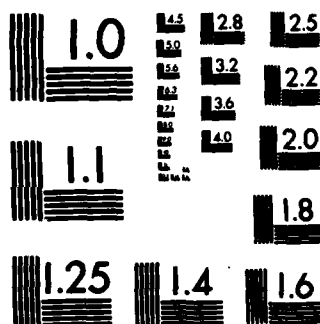
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... From the Archives

SURPRISE

Some precursors of war are more telling than others.

Hitler planned to invade Poland at 0415, 26 August 1939. Orders were sent to special combat teams to engage in pre-invasion offensive operations up to 12 hours in advance. Teams braced all along the Polish border. For political reasons, however, Hitler changed his mind the evening of 25 August. Orders were flashed in a herculean effort to stop all combat teams. But one team failed to receive the word.

At 0001 on 26 August, the "lost" combat team opened fire, defeating a superior Polish force at Mosty, capturing the pass and its vital railroad station.

While waiting for a division that never arrived, a baffled Lieutenant Albrecht Herzner, team commander, asked the Polish colonel he had taken prisoner of war: "What's the matter? Aren't Germany and Poland at war?"

"I told you they aren't," the Pole replied. "You can find it out for yourself if you don't believe me."

So Herzner turned to the telephone in the station. He got through to his base command and was told by his frantic division intelligence officer to drop everything—prisoners and booty—and come back as quickly as he could.

Officially World War II started at 0445, 1 September 1939. The first shots were fired about six days and five hours earlier, though, and were virtually ignored.

SOURCE: *The Game of the Foxes* by Ladislav Farago, pp. 165-167.

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